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The Dialectic of Blackness and Full Citizenship: A Case Study of Haitian Migration to the Dominican Republic

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The Dialectic of Blackness and Full Citizenship:
A Case Study of Haitian Migration to the Dominican Republic

by

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Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2016

Dedication

For my son Julian and for Alirio, Jennika, Willie and all the young black children I met in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. May you have the opportunity to grow in a more just world.

Acknowledgements

I would like to offer my special thanks to my adviser, Dr. Christen A. Smith, who guided me throughout this entire process and encouraged me to tell things as they are. I would also like to offer my special thanks to my second reader, Dr. Jossianna Arroyo, who provided invaluable input as I crafted my work. Thank you both for your inspiring work and your mentorship. I wish to acknowledge the support that the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS) gave me in order to be able to carry out this research project from beginning to end; I am particularly grateful for the continuous support of Dr. Lorraine Leu and fellow LLILAS graduate Perla Miranda. I am also especially grateful for the unconditional and infinite support I received from my partner, Lorena Tule-Romain. Thank you also to all my family members and friends who supported me throughout this process. Finally, I would like to thank every woman and man in the Dominican Republic and Haiti who trusted me with their story and perspective on this difficult and often painful period of time.

Abstract

The Dialectic of Blackness and Full Citizenship: A Case Study of Haitian Migration to the Dominican Republic

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2016

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In 2015 the Dominican Republic enforced a series of measures to expel undocumented Haitian immigrants and unregistered Dominicans of Haitian descent. As a result, thousands of people of Haitian descent became "illegal", deportable subjects forced to either return to Haiti or live in hiding in the Dominican Republic. This thesis presents a theoretical and ethnographic reflection on this most recent citizenship crisis between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Migration carried out despite legal restrictions can be considered a modern form of resistance against racialized and historically defined social structures that disproportionately affect impoverished black people of Haitian descent. How have restrictions on migration and immigration gradually crystallized the lives of black people as less valuable than those of whites and others who fit-in with white, Eurocentric values? During a time in which international migration has gained a great deal of worldwide prominence, the question of citizenship and belonging for people of Haitian descent living in the Dominican Republic is a window that provides insights into the politics of illegality

that have been mobilized to justify the abuse and even the killing of people who have violated established rules of border crossing. Grounded in ethnographic research carried out in the Dominican Republic and Haiti from May to July of 2015, this thesis draws on the work of Sylvia Wynter (2007), Charles W. Mills (1999), and John Rawls (1971) to contemplate the ways in which the social and economic exclusion of black people of Haitian descent has been historically promoted and justified. Further, engaging the theories of Aviva Chomsky (2004), Abdias do Nascimento (1980) and Neil Roberts (2015), the thesis argues that undocumented migration is 21st century marronage – a mode of resistance, through flight, against oppressive socio-economic structures.

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Introduction

Over 450 police officers in riot gear were present that morning, both inside and outside the Ministry of Interior and Police in Santo Domingo. A crowd of approximately 3,000 undocumented, black, Haitian migrants was waiting in line outside of the building, hoping to legalize their status in the country before the looming deadline. The police had come to "maintain the peace." Some Haitian immigrants had been there in line since early in the morning. Some had been there for days, and weeks. Entire families were present, including mothers carrying small children in their arms. All were in search of a temporary reprieve from deportation. Across the street the Union of Sugarcane Workers, over 300 strong, made their presence felt, protesting loudly in a scene so unconventional that people passing by took photos and videos. It was June 17th, 2015, the deadline for undocumented immigrants to participate in the government's process to regularize the status of foreigners who were in the country without prior authorization. The crowd had been growing larger each day as the deadline neared. The scene that day made the migration and citizenship crisis in the Dominican Republic painfully visible. As the day went on, reality for many became stark: they were not going to meet the deadline.

Just a few days prior to June 17th, some people grew desperate and attempted to push their way into the building. The police responded with tear gas to disperse the crowd. Several people were injured, including Marie Louise, who was eight months pregnant at

the time.[1] Many feared that that desperation, pushing and police repression could happen again. As the day went on, the waiting immigrants received conflicting information. Some had gotten leaflets telling them they could return Monday to continue the process. As midnight approached and the hours and days of waiting took their toll, faced with a line that did not seem to move, many resigned themselves and left to go home, perhaps hoping that the unconfirmed extension was true. It was not. The deadline was final. Hundreds continued to wait outside and even lay down on the sidewalk with blankets to get a few minutes of sleep while they continued to wait. For some, especially those who came from distant towns, sleeping outside for days had, unfortunately, become part of their wait. Overnight, more than 200,000 people would be considered deportable—a new day with a new set of uncertainties.

This thesis documents the most recent expulsion of Haitian people from the Dominican Republic, a process that was set in motion with presidential decree 327 of 2013, which ordered the implementation of the "national regularization plan." Although there have been several prior measures to expel Haitian migrants from Dominican territory (with recent ones in 1991, 2005, and the 1937 "corte" being the most infamous one) the current process is significant when considered alongside the 2010 constitutional change that flat-out denies the right to citizenship to people born in the Dominican Republic to undocumented parents. Based on my intensive ethnographic fieldwork in the Dominican Republic and Haiti in the summer of 2015, this thesis chronicles the experiences of

[1] De la Cruz, Santiago. "Impiden a Haitianos Entrar Por La Fuerza a Ministerio." Listindiario.com, June 16, 2015. http://www.listindiario.com/la-republica/2015/06/16/376651/impiden-a-haitianos-entrar-por-la-fuerza-a-ministerio

impoverished Haitian migrants and contemplates recent legal changes in the Dominican Republic and their repercussions for Haitian migrants and their children. It also provides socio-historical context for the contemporary plight of Haitian migrants and their descendants, taking into account not just the Dominican setting, but also the role of Haitian elites and the U.S. government.

The deportation deadline of June 17, 2015 was the apex of the most recent expulsion process in a genealogy of expulsion measures over time. The 2015 actions sought to enforce a 2004 migration law[2] which, among several provisions, controversially affirmed that the children of undocumented immigrants born on Dominican soil would be considered to be "in transit" and, thus, ineligible for Dominican citizenship.[3] As a result, thousands of people of Haitian descent living in the Dominican Republic were threatened with losing their citizenship and their rights to reside in the country.

I arrived in the Dominican Republic in May, 2015, in the weeks leading up to the final deadline for the regularization plan, which would provide temporary residency for those who successfully completed their applications. This would allow beneficiaries to seek employment legally, perhaps even in fields that were formerly unavailable to them because of their legal status in the country. During the months I was there, Dominican society was preoccupied with this process. Almost daily, newspapers featured front-page updates (Figure 2). TV and Radio talk-shows also made sure the topic was on everyone's

[2] Law No. 285-04 on Migration

[3] Apparent contradictions between the laws and the nation's constitution would eventually result in a day in court at the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, in 2005. Disavowing the court's ruling, the Dominican government proceeded in 2010 to amend its constitution in order to affirm that Dominican citizenship would not be conferred to the children of undocumented immigrants.

mind. It was not uncommon to hear people discuss this topic while riding public transportation. The prominence of this topic in Dominican society may have contributed to the quick departure of thousands of Haitian migrants who left toward Haiti out of fear of violent reprisals.

Although the registration process was a requirement for all foreign nationals, the government primarily conceived of it as a way to restrict and reduce the population of undocumented Haitian immigrants in the country. Dominican ultranationalist groups that perceive the presence of Haitians as a threat would claim that there are over 2 million Haitians in the country. However, a 2012 study yielded an estimate of 524,632 immigrants residing in the country, of which 87.3% were born in Haiti.[4] This population consists primarily of impoverished people who arrived in the Dominican Republic to work as sugarcane cutters through agreements between both nations, and of Haitian migrants who arrived on their own; some to join the sugarcane workers, others simply seeking economic opportunities they could not find in Haiti. The current legal processes to manage and regulate the presence of Haitian immigrants and their offspring in the Dominican Republic is the latest manifestation of a long-term conflict between the two nations, in which colonial and imperial powers are also embroiled. However, this moment is particularly significant because, although previously there was ambiguity around who would be eligible for citizenship, the 2010 constitutional amendment represents a clear break which will have important implications in the years ahead. This constitutional change posits that any child

[4] Oficina Nacional de Estadística. La Primera Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes en la República Dominicana (ENI). 2012. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Oficina Nacional de Estadística Retrieved April 12, 2016 http://media.onu.org.do/ONU_DO_web/596/sala_prensa_publicaciones/docs/0565341001372885891.pdf

born on Dominican soil to undocumented parents will no longer have birthright citizenship, which means they will inherit the same legal status of their parents. From the moment they are born, they will be "illegally present" within the Dominican nation-state. The implications of this need to be continuously assessed and evaluated.

On June 26, in the outskirts of Santiago, I met with a group of 14 Haitian immigrants who were hiding-out inside their small community church. Just 9 days prior, on June 17, the deadline for them to participate in the government's process had passed. This group was not among the 239,000 foreign nationals who, according to the Interior and Police minister, had been able to complete the regularization process.[5][6] They were now among the over two-hundred thousand who would have to leave or face deportation. Some of them have lived in the Dominican Republic for over 20 years and have never returned to Haiti. Others have children who were born on Dominican soil and are now also at risk of losing their right to Dominican citizenship because of the Dominican government's first process to determine who is and is not eligible for citizenship.

Even though impoverished people left from Haiti because of oppressive economic conditions, and found a temporary place in which to seek better opportunities, once the regularization process ended, their fate became even more uncertain. Prior to this process their existence was still liminal. Now, they are officially fugitives and will have to face the government's plans for deportations, as well as the threat of violence from intolerant

[5] Initially 288,466 people were able to initiate the regularization process, but 49,466 were not able to meet all the requirements. Pascual, Kelvin. 2016. "Varios Meses Sin Datos de Total Regularizados," Diario Hoy. March 16, 2016. http://hoy.com.do/varios-meses-sin-datos-de-total-regularizados/

[6] Leclerc, Isabel. "288,466 Extranjeros Pudieron Inscribirse En El Plan de Regularización." Listin Diario. June 18, 2015. http://listindiario.com/la-republica/2015/06/18/376955/288466-extranjeros-pudieron-inscribirse-en-el-plan-de-regularizacin

nationalists who have declared that they will personally deport Haitians if the government is slow to act. Some will brave things out. Others will end up returning to Haiti or will seek to migrate elsewhere if the possibility arises.

Migration carried out despite legal restrictions can be considered a modern form of resistance against racialized and historically defined social structures that disproportionately affect impoverished black people of Haitian descent. How have restrictions on migration and immigration gradually crystallized the lives of black people as less valuable than those of whites and others who fit-in with white, Eurocentric values? During a time in which international migration has gained a great deal of worldwide prominence, the question of citizenship and belonging for people of Haitian descent living in the Dominican Republic is a window that provides insights into the politics of illegality that have been mobilized to justify the abuse and even the killing of people who have violated established rules of border crossing (as was the case of the 1937 massacre of over 20,000 Haitians whose crime was to be on the wrong side of the Dominican-Haitian border). This thesis draws on the work of Sylvia Wynter (2007), Charles W. Mills (1999), and John Rawls (1971) to contemplate the ways in which the social and economic exclusion of black people of Haitian descent has been historically promoted and justified. Further, engaging the theories of Aviva Chomsky (2004), Abdias do Nascimento (1980) and Neil Roberts (2015), the thesis argues that undocumented migration is 21st century marronage – a mode of resistance, through flight, against oppressive socio-economic structures.

Given the prominence and legitimizing effect of human rights discourse, recent studies on Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent have focused on the loss of citizenship of Dominicans of Haitian descent, an act which has been condemned by human rights institutions, despite their inability to implement any strong sanctions against the Dominican government. This lack of power to enforce rulings pertaining to violations committed against people of Haitian descent whose citizenship has been denied provides other nations facing increasing migration of people from Haiti a road-map through which they can commit violations without any international repercussion. The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos have recently also began implementing legal measures in an attempt to dissuade the migration of impoverished people from Haiti.[7] However, I argue that the established status quo that enables the creation of illegal immigrants is the core issue itself that needs to be addressed. Given the long and ongoing history of racialized social and economic oppression and marginalization that black Haitian people and their descendants continue to endure, their undocumented migration is a valid form of resistance, as a 21st century manifestation of marronage.

UNDERSTANDING THE MIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP CONTEXT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

After much confusion and controversy, two separate, but inextricably related processes were set in motion by the government in 2013 and 2014. The first one was a

[7] Robles, Frances. "Immigration Rules in Bahamas Sweep Up Haitians." *The New York Times*, January 30, 2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/31/world/haitians-are-swept-up-as-bahamas-tightens-immigration-rules.html

process to restore the right to citizenship for people whose nationality had been called into question following a 2013 constitutional tribunal ruling 168-13, which would come to be called "La Sentencia" by those affected – primarily Dominicans of Haitian descent. This initial process was set in motion through law 169-14. The deadline to participate in that process was February 2, 2015. On this June day, however, people waited outside the Ministry of Interior and Police to apply for the second process: one designed to "regularize" foreign immigrants. This second process was set in motion by presidential decree 327 of 2013, enforcing the 2004 migration law. Indeed, much confusion has surrounded these recent laws, especially since the government and the media have often conflated Haitian immigrants with Dominicans of Haitian descent.[8]

Although these two recent government policies to restore the citizenship of Dominicans of Haitian descent and regularize undocumented immigrants have been important steps to clarify previous legislation, they both fell short in key ways, and led instead to the creation of a large population of people who have since been considered deportable.

Complicated bureaucratic processes and hidden costs meant that only 239,000, out of more than 500,000 possible beneficiaries were able to completely register in the government's plan. Poor people of Haitian descent had to pay more than what they earned in one or two months in order to complete the application process. Applicants who did not

[8] Romain, Jheison; 2015 - Confusion, Citizenship and Human Rights in the Dominican Republic - http://www.latinorebels.com/2015/07/13/confusion-citizenship-and-human-rights-in-the-dominican-republic

fulfill all the requirements or could not afford the process would be subject to deportation to Haiti.

Dominick Atilus, 19, migrated from Haiti with his father when he was a young boy. His father passed away a few years ago and he now lives alone with his siblings in the Dominican Republic. Dominick believed the national regularization plan was a good idea, as it would allow families who have lived and worked in the Dominican Republic for years to finally legalize their status. However, the fact that the government had not issued documentation in the specified period of time, but moved expediently to acquire buses for deportations, awoke his suspicions regarding the true aim of these two processes. "People will never receive their documents," Dominick lamented. He is only one among many who have expressed concerns regarding these recent policies.

Abdias Berrouet, a young medical student in Santo Domingo, considered the current legalization process "fictitious" because of the lack of information issued by the government regarding what exactly the "regularization" will entail and because of what seems like insurmountable requirements. Yet, many are still optimistic. Dominick himself is anxious but hopeful that he will be able to receive his documents. Without them, he is unable to enroll in school, and for him education is his best way out of an otherwise certain future of hard labor.

Ana Maria Belique, a Dominican of Haitian descent who leads www.r*econoci.do* – a civil society effort to have the citizenship of Dominicans of Haitian descent recognized and restored – pointed out that, as a result of the first process, the Central Electoral Commission (Junta Central Electoral) – the agency that, among other functions,

administers the documentation of Dominican citizens – has three different registration ledgers: one for children born in the Dominican Republic to parents documented as Dominican citizens, a second for children born after 2007 to parents who are foreigners, and a third for transcribed birth certificates of Dominicans born to parents who are not Dominican citizens. The last category includes Dominicans born to foreign parents who were removed from the books after the 2013 Constitutional tribunal ruling that invalidated the citizenship of anyone born to undocumented parents after 1929.

In total, only 8,755 Dominicans of Haitian descent were able to register as citizens for the first time; and – according to contested government figures[9] — 55,000 Dominicans of Haitian descent were able to have their citizenship restored. This means that only a fraction out of an estimated 200,000 were able to have their birth certificates transcribed and their citizenship acknowledged by the February 2nd deadline. Within two years, these people will have to go through a naturalization process, meaning that their citizenship has not been automatically restored. This first process has, for many, created a category of second-class citizenship, raising many questions regarding the long-term implications.

Through these two recent policies, a large population of "deportable" people has been created in the Dominican Republic, the vast majority of whom are Haitian or of Haitian descent. Following the June 17th deadline, thousands decided to “self-deport.” The Dominican government has since also moved forward with deportation of people who were not able to apply for either of these policies, a process which, as the regularization plan,

[9] Katz, Jonathan M. “In Exile.” *The New York Times*, January 13, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/17/magazine/haitians-in-exile-in-the-dominican-republic.html

will likely also entail racial profiling.[10] If unable to provide proof of their legal status at any given moment, a person who fits the "Haitian" profile will likely be picked up by immigration officials and taken to one of the seven holding camps set-up by the government for deportees. Whether their human rights will be respected when being deported, or whether their "illegality" will also be used as a way to continue to exploit a population that is mostly impoverished remains to be seen.

A Brief History of Haiti and the Dominican Republic

The island that was re-named La Española, or Hispaniola in English, by the Spanish colonizers, would become the site of the beginning of European colonization in the Americas. It would be here that Frey Bartolome de Las Casas, after witnessing the violent exploitation and genocide of the Taíno indigenous people who inhabited the island, would submit an appeal on their behalf, suggesting instead that Africans be brought as forced laborers.[11] And it would also be here that in 1522 the first rebellion against European colonization in the Americas would take place, a first of many individual and collective acts of resistance against the established status quo that would be largely relegated to historical obscurity. Today, this island, which was formerly called Haiti or "Mountainous Land" in the Arawak language of the now defunct Taíno people, is shared by the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti, two nation-states whose complex and

[10] Noticias SIN "Extranjeros Que No Son Haitianos Entran a Oficina de Regularización Sin Hacer Fila.", June 17, 2015. http://www.noticiassin.com/2015/06/extranjeros-que-no-son-haitianos-entran-a-oficina-de-regularizacion-sin-hacer-fila/#comments

[11] Smartt Bell, Madison. *Toussaint Louverture: A Biography*. 1st ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 2007. Pg. 6

divergent histories provide important context for the current events unfolding in both nations; particularly also when considering the role of the imperialist legacy of the United States in the Americas, following the "Monroe doctrine."

After rising tension on the island because of the perceived increase in migration of impoverished black people from Haiti to the Dominican Republic, and because of a persistent anti-Haitian discourse that posits Haiti and Haitians as antithetical to Dominican values, the Dominican government took decisive measures that would make the presence of undocumented Haitian immigrants, and their offspring born on Dominican soil, categorically illegal. In response to international uproar, the impact of these measures was mitigated, but continues to pose a threat to Dominicans of Haitian descents as well as to Haitian labor workers who arrived in the nation through now expired agreements between the two nations, as is the case for people who worked as sugarcane cutters.

Currently, legal migration to another nation is largely contingent upon access to economic resources. That is, people who desire to migrate to another nation must have economic proof that they will make positive contributions to the receiving nation. That evidence is usually access to economic wealth and a clean criminal background. However, up until recently, in many nations, race played a significant role as part of this evidence. Since the global abolition of racial chattel slavery, blackness has often become a signifier of poverty and undesirability which has also been codified in the migration policy of many nations. Today, race continues to play a significant role in shaping class, and thus access

to economic wealth.[12] In other words, by employing certain policies that discriminate on economic basis, because of the long history of economic dispossession and disenfranchisement based on race, those policies that exclude people without access to economic wealth also disproportionately exclude people who descended from formerly enslaved African people, indigenous people and other colonized people across the globe.[13] How and by whom are policy decisions made? Who benefits and who is excluded from the right to citizenship and what role does race and racialization play as these decisions are made?

Haiti – a nation that was established after a successful slave revolt against the European colonizers who validated their actions through an ideology of white supremacy – has had to pay an overwhelming price for its defiance against the hegemonic racial hierarchy. The brunt of this burden has fallen upon the backs of Haitian peasants, many of whom have had to migrate outside of Haiti in order to seek a way to sustain themselves and their families.

As long as the Haitian nation-state remains unable, or unwilling, to provide adequate opportunities for all of its citizens, migration will continue to be an important option for many. The illegalization of migration, particularly for people who flee oppressive conditions in search of opportunities to sustain themselves and their families, serves as a way to force people to remain within the boundaries of the nation-state to which

[12] Hooker, Juliet, and Alvin B. Tillery Jr. "What's Wrong With Inequality Studies?" The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 3, 2016. http://chronicle.com/article/What-s-Wrong-With-Inequality/235900/?key=piIwZGSReMWgrhtqcjqGohsJzC_WeMVsI_hvtUHI1v5RWTNGcVdLcFE2RHlJSXZUU3pIbHpjODVsRC1vYm9NTk1wazVqT1p4alg0

[13] Mills, Charles. 1999. The Racial Contract. 1st New edition edition. Cornell University Press.

they have been assigned by the current world order. The implementation of neoliberal policies that foster conditions favorable for capitalist enterprises – but undermine domestic industries such as agriculture – forces people in impoverished nations either to provide extremely low-wage labor to corporate interests; to participate in what is commonly considered the informal economic sector; or to migrate "illegally" elsewhere in order to improve their material conditions.

Historically, access to wealth or a perceived greater value – as in the case of expensive "economic citizenship" policies[14] as well as migration policies that prioritized the arrival of white migrants – has been a precondition for migration. For those without the means to migrate through the legally established routes, unauthorized migration becomes the only option, and as such it becomes an act of resistance to the status quo that seeks to privilege those who already have access to wealth.

I argue that unauthorized migration is a racialized, modern manifestation of marronage – the mode of resistance through flight, in which enslaved people engaged while slavery was still a legal institution. Today, mechanisms through which people are often forced into exploitative labor are more sophisticated, so the search for better living conditions elsewhere is as valid for oppressed people today as it was for enslaved people

[14] Several nations have established measures to foster domestic economic investment. For instance, the small island nation of Dominica (not to be confused with the Dominican Republic) offers citizenship to anyone who can afford the $100,000 fee and can receive clearance on an FBI background check. The benefit of acquiring a citizen despite the high cost is that it can help wealthy individuals to avoid paying taxes to other nations. Candidates don't even have to have lived in Dominica before applying for citizenship. As cited by Williams, Robert. "A Second Passport with Dominica—My Experience." International Man, September 13, 2013.http://www.internationalman.com/articles/a-second-passport-with-dominica—my-experience
Incidentally, the United States also offers a path to citizenship, through a investor program known as the EB-5, as cited by Parmar, Neil. "The Millionaire Residency Visa." *The Wall Street Journal*, September 20, 2013. http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323665504579032922966616830

two hundred ago. However, as alluded to earlier, it is important to consider also that the Dominican Republic alone is not to take all the blame for the material conditions of Haitian migrants. For this, it is also important to recall the role of the Haitian state and of the United States' imperial interventionism. These are aspects that are explored in the first chapter.

It is impossible to talk about Haiti without evoking a memory of: its past as the world's largest and most profitable slave colony; the Haitian Revolution; and the country's contemporary status of "poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere." The fact is, these three prominent features of Haiti are inextricably related. After defeating Western imperial powers in 1804, the former colony declared its independence from France, putting an end to the once highly profitable institution of racial chattel slavery. However, for the formerly enslaved, emancipation did not necessarily mean freedom, as post-colonial Haiti still depended on the forced labor of many of the people who were formerly enslaved. And thus, for many Haitians, as their ancestors before them who were enslaved Africans, marronage continues to be the way to seek that freedom. In chapter two I argue that the manifestation of contemporary "illegal" migration to the Dominican Republic and other nations by black, impoverished Haitian people, is a modern manifestation of marronage as a form of resistance against constraints implemented by modern nation-states as currently configured.

A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Although my initial motivation to carry-out research in the Dominican Republic was to document the experiences of Dominicans of Haitian descent whose citizenship had

been called into questions through the 2013 constitutional tribunal ruling – a situation that the Inter-American Court on Human Rights has considered to be a violation of international human rights[15][16] – as I began to gain a better understanding of the situation, my attention shifted toward the experiences of Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic and the causes and reasons for their migration.

Outside the Ministry of Interior and Police in Santo Domingo, the principal center designated for people to take part in this process, day after day, there were long lines of people, the vast majority of whom were dark-skinned, presumably Haitian immigrants. I was also able to see that this was the case in the cities of Santiago and Puerto Plata, though it was likely also the case in the other 24 centers throughout the country in which this process was carried out.

My thesis draws on multi-sited ethnography through which the experiences of impoverished Haitian migrants will be explored. For this research, I spent just over two months in the Dominican Republic, interviewing undocumented immigrants as they waited to register in this government program. After the deadline had passed, I also met with a number of Haitians as they migrated to Haiti on their own volition, under the perceived threat of violent reprisals from communities that had ostensibly grown increasingly intolerant, and as a way to avoid being deported. And finally, I met with undocumented

[15] IACHR. "IACHR Expresses Deep Concern Over Ruling by the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic." Text, October 8, 2013. http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/073.asp
[16] Miranda, Sasha. 2014. "Citizens without a Nation: The Construction of Haitian Illegality and Deportability in the Dominican Republic." M.A., Illinois State University.

immigrants who decided to remain in the Dominican Republic despite the risk of being deported.

I carried out interviews at the Ministry of Interior and Police in Santo Domingo; at one of the main bus terminals, also in Santo Domingo; and along the northern Dominican Republic-Haiti border in the towns of Dajabón and Ouinamenthe, respectively. Additionally, I also spent time meeting with Haitian immigrants in a batey[17], in a small town located next to a now closed-down sugar mill in the north of the country. Given the sensitive nature of some of the stories they shared with me, I will not include the actual name of this community. I also draw on a number of interviews of Dominican citizens regarding their views on Haitian migrants and the regularization process, as well as the current political context in the country. Furthermore, I will also draw on an interview I carried with the Haitian ambassador in the Dominican Republic. As a supplement to this thesis, I also created a digital archive of some of the video interviews I carried out over the summer. This archive can be accessed through the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCblcMwLfbVCTpMQRa4tD00g

Positionality

Although my skin tone is dark brown, and I would certainly not pass a "paper bag test" in the United States,[18] in the Dominican Republic, I am interpellated[19] as a Dominican

[17] A batey is community built specifically for sugarcane cutters beside large plantations in the Dominican Republic.
[18] Kerr, Audrey Elisa. The Paper Bag Principle: Class, Colorism, and Rumor and the Case of Black Washington. Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2006.
[19] Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)." In *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, edited by Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, 86–110. John Wiley & Sons, 2006.

by Dominicans themselves and by Haitians. In fact, the vast majority of Haitians I have met did not see me as a "black person." To them, a black person is one whose both parents are of an "unmixed" black ancestry. I found myself explaining to several people that, although I do come from a mixed background, I identify as black and claim my blackness in part as a response to political projects that seek to force me to do the exact opposite – anti-black ideologies that are still widely promoted globally and even serve to shape migration policies.[20] To distance one's self from blackness is to also distance one's self from the African Diaspora and all it represents.

Nelson, a young Haitian man whom I met at the Ministry of Interior and Police as people waited to file their paperwork, wondering what a Dominican was doing sitting in the midst of a crowd of undocumented Haitians, decided to cleverly challenge me: He asked me a question about the paperwork process, in Kreyòl. I did not understand it completely, so I went on to explain to him, in Spanish, that I was a graduate student who was observing the on-going regularization process. After I introduced myself he lowered his guard and spoke to me openly about his experience with getting his documents. Nelson's skin tone was very similar to mine. Later he would tell me that his father is Dominican and his mother Haitian. I asked him why he had talked to me in Kreyòl. He said because if you speak to a Dominican in Kreyòl, instead of Spanish, they would usually react offended at the fact that they were being confused for a Haitian. "*A caso me viste cara de Haitiano?! -- "Do I look Haitian to you?!"* This is particularly the case with darker-skinned Dominicans

[20] Bashi, Vilna. "Globalized Anti-Blackness: Transnationalizing Western Immigration Law, Policy, and Practice." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27, no. 4 (July 1, 2004): 584–606. doi:10.1080/0141987042000216726.

who may be interpellated as Haitian, as I later learned from Porfirio Rincón de Jesús, a dark-skinned black Dominican who works as a coconut water vendor in Santo Domingo; although he interacts often with black Haitians, he said he avoided learning Kreyòl so as to not be confused for a Haitian immigrant. Victor, another gentleman who was sitting beside Nelson and I, said that you normally do not speak to someone in Kreyòl unless you are certain they are Haitian. In a sense, speaking Kreyòl is one of the attributes that contribute to ideas of who is black in the Dominican Republic; or at least of who is a particular type of black person. Because of the long history of impoverished, black Haitian laborers migrating to the Dominican Republic, a singular idea is formulated about who they are and what their language and, thus, their culture represents. Some people take it as an offense if spoken to in Kreyòl because they are being addressed as if they were a Haitian black person, with all that dominant ideas about Haitians in the Dominican Republic represent. This reminded me of my first few days in a batey in the north region of the country. After I received my first few lessons of Haitian Kreyòl, I started to greet people in that language "*Bon swa - good afternoon.*". After I passed by, many would react in surprise saying to one another: "*I thought he was Dominican*." The fact that I spoke to them in Kreyòl made me seem "darker," and, thus, Haitian.

OUTLINE

Chapter one explores the ways in which social and historical processes contributed to contemporary ideas about race on the island the Spanish colonizers named Hispaniola. It also consists of an analysis of the Dominican social contract, contemplating the important

role race has played in conferring access to citizenship. Thus, this chapter also contemplates the way in which race has served and continues to serve as a way to define a global hierarchy of human existence, with blackness often being placed at the negative side of a continuum in which whiteness becomes the global standard for humanity. These elements become important in understanding the normalization of measures to exclude people who are racialized as black, whether deliberately or in effect. Although ideas about race vary across the world, anti-blackness manifests itself globally,[21] as does the overrepresentation of whiteness as the default norm, or what Nirmal Puwar (2004) refers to as the somatic norm.[22] This chapter will draw on the work of Dominican scholars Lorgia García-Peña (2008, 2015) and Silvio Torres-Saillant (2000), former Dominican president Joaquín Balaguer (1983, 2001), political philosopher Charles W. Mills (1999), theorist Sylvia Winter (2003), and anthropologist Christen A. Smith (2013), among others, in order to argue that particular ideas about race have been used historically, and continue to be used, to preserve the social and economic privileges of elites, based on a racialized, gendered hierarchy that places black people, and black women in particular, at the bottom.

Chapter two builds upon the arguments made in chapter one and draws from the work of political theorist Neil Roberts (2015), scholar Abdias do Nacimento (1980), and Historian Aviva Chomsky (2014), to argue that the contemporary undocumented migration of racialized people from countries which constitute the "Third World" can be understood

[21] Pierre, Jemima. *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race*. Chicago ; London: University Of Chicago Press, 2012.
[22] Puwar, Nirmal. *Space Invaders : Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. 1st ed. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004.

as a modern manifestation of marronage. Marronage tends to have a racialized connotation, since it evokes the experiences of enslaved people of African descent and native Americans who took flight from the oppression of racial slavery imposed by European colonizers. Roberts and do Nascimento both theorize on the politics of the form of resistance through flight in which former runaway slaves engaged (marronage, quilombismo). Chomsky maps out the history of how migration became "illegal". I draw these texts together to argue that undocumented migration is a 21st century manifestation of marronage.

Finally, I offer some conclusions drawing the arguments made in both chapters together and contemplating the implications of the arguments laid out.

Over the next three chapters, I argue that for many undocumented immigrants, as for marrons during the era of European colonization, breaking the law and escaping are often the best ways to resist oppression. Conceptualizing marronage helps reveal the legitimacy of resistance against the man-made status of illegal migration, as it provides ways to think about how struggles for liberation are waged by the most oppressed, based on an understudied mode of resistance that, when revisited, reveals empowering ideas about freedom. I also suggest that all the walls that seek to contain people in a state of oppression are man-made and must be unsettled, questioned and brought down, particularly since the ways in which migration is currently restricted disproportionately affects members of communities that have already experienced a long history of exploitation and marginalization.

Blackness and Citizenship on the Island of Hispaniola

"Todo poder dominicano está y deberá estar siempre limitado por la ley y esta por la justicia, la cual consiste en dar a cada uno lo que en derecho le pertenezca.

Every Dominican power is and should be always limited by the law and the law by justice, which consists in giving each person which by, by right, belongs to them"[23]

– Juan Pablo Duarte

On my taxi ride from the Santo Domingo airport toward the apartment where I would be living for the next couple months, I was surprised at the ubiquity of electoral campaign billboards throughout the city. I arrived in May 21st, 2015. The next general elections would take place almost exactly a year later, on May 15, 2016. The president, the 32 senate and 190 chamber seats, as well as the 224 municipal district executives would all be up for election. Electoral campaigns were already well underway.

Figure 1: Leonel campaign billboard

[23] Duarte, Juan Pablo, Vetilio Alfau Durán, and Juan Pablo Duarte. *Ideario de Duarte, Y Su Proyecto E Constitución*. Colección de La Comisión Permanente de Efemérides Patrias, volumen no. 7. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: CPEP, Comisión Permanente de Efemérides Batrias, 2006. Pg. 24

"*Pa'lante con Leonel – Forward with Leonel*" read the billboards announcing former President Leonel Fernández's candidacy for the 2016-2020 term (Figure 1). He had previously served as president for a total of 12 years (1996–2000; 2004–12)[24], and in 2010 led the process to draft a new constitution. Controversially, through a new constitutional provision, the offspring of undocumented immigrants were officially excluded from the right to citizenship. With the 2010 changes to the constitution, Article 18 of the constitution now guarantees citizenship to:

> People born in the national territory, with the exception of the sons and daughters of foreign members of diplomatic and consular legations, of foreigners that find themselves in transit **or reside illegally in Dominican territory**. All foreigners are considered people in transit as defined in Dominican laws.[25]

The phrase above in bold (emphasis mine) is the additional wording not included in the previous constitution. Through this change, the government attempted to put to rest a decades-old debate over whether the children of undocumented Haitian immigrants born on Dominican soil had the right to citizenship. This change was made after a 1997 claim for citizenship on behalf of Dilcia Yean and Violeta Bosico, two young girls of Haitian ancestry. The girls' appeal was denied by the Dominican authorities and subsequently taken before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. On 2005, the court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and directed the Dominican government to uphold the right to citizenship

[24] "Leonel Fernandez Reyna | President of Dominican Republic." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed April 27, 2016. http://www.britannica.com/biography/Leonel-Fernandez-Reyna.
[25] "Dominican Republic Constitution - Article 18. Nationality." *Constitute*. Accessed April 27, 2016. https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Dominican_Republic_2015?lang=en#69

for these two young girls. The court also ordered the country to take the necessary steps to ensure that denials of citizenship – which the court considered to be based, in part, on racial discrimination—did not happen in the future.[26]

Taking an unintended cue from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, President Leonel Fernández responded to the court's ruling by making the 2010 constitutional change. Although the Inter-American Court of Human Rights sought to protect a disenfranchised community, through its ruling, the court offered a legal path for the Dominican Republic to deny citizenship to an already marginalized community, revealing a flaw in the international human rights legal framework that could also be exploited by other governments.

Three years later, on September 23, 2013, the constitutional tribunal would issue "*La Sentencia*[27]," a ruling that – basing itself on prior norms and jurisprudence, including a 1939 law that designated Haitian migrant workers as "non-immigrants" – declared that no one born after 1929 to undocumented people living in the country had the right to citizenship.[28] This led to the invalidation of the right to citizenship even for people who had already obtained their national IDs and had Dominican passports issued. As historian Amelia Hintzen (2014) documents, since the 1930s, there has been a long history of measures taken by the government to restrict the presence of Haitian migrants in the

[26] Republic, Dominican. "Yean and Bosico v. Dominican Republic." *Open Society Foundations*. Accessed April 27, 2016. https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/litigation/yean-and-bosico-v-dominican-republic
[27] Sentencia 168-13 of the Constitutional Tribunal
[28] Hintzen, Amelia. "Historical Forgetting and the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal." *Journal of Haitian Studies* 20, no. 1 (2014): 108–16. doi:10.1353/jhs.2014.0003.

Dominican Republic to specific areas where they would be "tolerated." That is, they would be accepted by Dominican elites as long as Haitians remained in labor-related areas. "By withholding immigration documents, even to those who qualified for them, the Dominican government attempted to make sugar plantations the only legal spaces for Haitians to reside and work."[29]

In the summer of 2015, President Leonel Fernández himself suffered the consequences of yet another constitutional revision. Per the constitution he had promulgated while in office, he was not able to pursue reelection once his term was over in 2012. But, the constitution did allow a former president to seek office once more after another person had served a four-year term. Current president Danilo Medina is of the same political party as Fernández,[30] and was fully aware of his predecessors' intentions to run for office following his term. However, since he enjoyed wide popular support, Medina decided to lead a constitutional change of his own. After a brief but contentious internal debate within the political party, on June 13, 2015 a new amendment was approved that would allow president Danilo Medina's to pursue consecutive reelection[31] (Figure 2).

[29] Hintzen, Amelia. 2014. Pg. 111
[30] Dominican Liberation Party -- "Partido de la Liberación Dominicana" in Spanish, PLD
[31] "Re-Election for Presidents Considered in Dominican Republic." Accessed April 27, 2016. http://news.yahoo.com/election-presidents-considered-dominican-republic-013136197.html.


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El plazo para cerrar el Plan de Regularización

Figure 2: Newspaper announces proclamation of reformed constitution that allows reelection, highlights also "enormous lines" for the on-going regularization process.

Awkwardly, Fernández's electoral billboards would remain on display for several weeks after this seemingly sudden change (Figure 1). While he had to step aside as Medina furthered his own political aspirations, this quick chain of events raised important questions regarding the Dominican Republic as a nation-state. Other than a small note from the Associated Press,[32] this change went almost unnoticed by the international press, which focused their attention on the government's processes to regulate the presence of foreign

[32] "Dominican Republic's President Ponders Seeking 2nd Term After Re-Election Reform Approved." Text.Article. *Associated Press*, June 18, 2015. http://www.foxnews.com/world/2015/06/18/dominican-republic-president-ponders-seeking-2nd-term-after-re-election-reform.html

immigrants within its borders – the vast majority of them impoverished, Black Haitians. Domestic press also continued to give full, continuous attention to the plan to regularize Haitian immigrants (Figure 2). However, this short-lived constitutional debate revealed a great deal about the nation's liberal democracy and how and for whom structures of power function.

Drawing on ethnographic work conducted during the summer of 2015, this chapter explores how the exclusion and marginalization of Haitians from citizenship has been carried out and enforced in a racialized and gendered way through acts promoted and carried out by the governments of the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and the United States. This chapter first considers the way hegemonic ideas about blackness have developed on the island of Hispaniola. Drawing on philosopher Charles W. Mill's argument that modern liberal democracies are inherently flawed because they fail to address the racialization that is embedded into the governing structures of post-colonial societies, I argue that the current citizenship and migration crisis is a racialized and gendered transnational predicament that can only be fully understood when looking at the history of the three nations mentioned above. And as such, it is an issue that has to be addressed by the ruling classes of the three nations.

"I WANT TO HAVE THOSE PAPERS IN MY HANDS SO I CAN HAVE PEACE!"

While on the border town of Ouanaminthe, Haiti, I began the morning walking along the bridge that leads into the Dominican town of Dajabón. There I spoke with a handful of people who told me that over the past few days, several people had been "self-deporting," allegedly through a grace period the Dominican government had offered to

undocumented immigrants who had failed to meet the June 17 deadline to apply for temporary residency. Since I had not been able to connect to the internet for a few days because I did not have a smartphone with me that could work with a Haitian sim card, I had not been unable to check the Dominican newspapers online to read about the most recent developments.

In Dajabón, as I approached several Haitian civil police officers to inquire about the deportation of people and how that process was taking place, I struggled to communicate since I could not find someone who spoke Spanish. Most people I had met in Ouanaminthe, in addition to Kreyòl, spoke some Spanish, perhaps because twice a week, on Mondays and Fridays, the border is opened for market day on the Dominican side. The Haitian civil police officers I encountered only spoke Kreyòl, so they were probably not from Ouanaminthe. As I attempted my best to communicate with them, a young man intervened and helped me by interpreting what I was trying to ask. He helped me convey that I was carrying out research regarding the migration of people from Haiti and the recent legal and constitutional changes in the Dominican Republic that were contributing to the deportation of a large group of people. After communicating with the civil police, I focused my attention on this young man when I noticed that he spoke Spanish with a greater proficiency than most people I had met in that town. I asked him where he learned to speak Spanish so well, to which he responded "*I was born in Santiago de los Caballeros, in the Dominican Republic.*"

Santiago is the second largest city in the Dominican Republic. And, as I have heard from a few people, and as several 2015 news reports suggest,[33][34] it is also a place in which the issue of anti-Haitian discrimination has been particularly poignant. The city received worldwide attention in February, 2015, after Henry Claude-Jean, a Haitian immigrant, was found hanged from a tree in a prominent park.[35]

As we watched several trucks cross the border, with Haitian families on board, I continued my conversation with the young men who helped me communicate with the Haitian civil police. His name is Billy[36], and he is 16 years old. He said he was on his way home from school. Every day he walks over one and a half hours – crossing the border from Ouanaminthe, Haiti, to Dajabón, Dominican Republic – in order to attend school. He later explained that he has to do this because of issues surrounding his documentation. Since he has a birth certificate from the Dominican Republic he was given a hard time in Haitian schools, which prevented him from registering to attend school there. Despite the fact that he can now attend school in the Dominican Republic, he expressed that because his birth certificate was issued as a "birth certificate for a foreigner", he still doubts whether he will be able to obtain a Dominican cédula (national ID) and thus his Dominican citizenship.

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[33] Noticias SIN. *Desalojan a La Fuerza a Más de 500 Haitianos En Moca Por Asesinato de Estudiante Dominicano*, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP_WXJ9vmPc.

[34] Del Rosario, Yoraima. "Grupo Pisotea Y Quema Bandera Haitiana En Barrio de Santiago - Periódico Digital Dominicano - 7días.com.do." Accessed May 3, 2016. http://www.7dias.com.do/el-pais/2015/02/10/i182119_grupo-pisotea-quema-bandera-haitiana-barrio-santiago.html#.VykoyL4TEXs

[35] Brodzinsky, Sibylla. "Man Lynched in Dominican Republic as Tensions Run High." *The Guardian*, February 12, 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/12/dominican-republic-lynching-haiti-fears-human-rights

[36] I changed his name to protect his identity.

I was interested in interviewing him, but since he was a minor, I told him I would need to speak to his mother in order to receive consent. I also wanted to see if it would be possible to interview her, given her experience as a migrant between the two neighboring nations. Billy said he could take me to where his mother works, as long as I did not mind taking a long walk. I shook my head and told him I did not have a problem with that.

As we walked, he spoke to me about his thoughts on the current political struggles of Haiti. In Billy's view, historically, the government has not worked well enough to address the needs of those who have the least and need the most. I was impressed by the analysis he was making and by the level of political awareness he had, at such a young age. He said he wanted to possibly become a diplomat one day, in order to work on behalf of Haiti, to help work to build the nation. However, he also expressed his disillusionment with the lack of influence a diplomat would really have. Diplomats must follow the directives of the national government after all. I would later recall Billy's point, after I interviewed the Haitian ambassador to the Dominican Republic in Santo Domingo.

After walking for nearly 20 minutes, we arrived to see Lucia Jules, Billy's mother. She was at work at a bakery adjacent to a large school. She greeted us warmly, and hugged and kissed me as if she had known me for a very long time. She must have thought I was one of her son's friends, though I had only met him about an hour prior. The school next door was just getting out and the rush of students wanting to buy pastries was beginning to trickle in. She said she did not have time to talk then, but welcomed me to come by her house later that day, at 4pm. I agreed. Before we left, though, she handed each of us pastries that had been recently taken out of the oven, judging from how warm they still were. They

were delicious. I thanked her and left with Billy, who showed me back to the hotel where I was staying.

Later that same day, as Billy and I walked along the unpaved back roads of Ouanaminthe toward his mother's house, he pointed out that there was too much trash in the city's roads. He mentioned that he had started an organization that seeks to work to improve the city's conditions and prepare the city's youth to one day become agents of change for Haiti. He has organized events in which young men and women gather to collect trash, which they then take to a local landfill. He said he has also worked to help train local youth on health-related issues, such as HIV prevention, and that on weekends he also volunteers at a local orphanage. A few months prior, when Haitian president Michel Martelly visited Ouanaminthe, Billy had the opportunity to meet him and asked him for help for his organization. The president said he would support their work. But Billy never heard back from the president's staff after that. Time and time again I had to remind myself that he was just 16 years old. I can see that this young man has a lot of potential.

As we approached his mother's home, we saw her sitting outside, staring into the distance, as if deep in thought. I complimented her on her beautiful home. She said she had toiled very hard to be able to buy the land and then build her home. It is a house with three bedrooms and an ample yard. She showed me around and told me that next she plans to make a few more additions to her home, with the cement blocks that were already placed in her yard. We sat outside, in the front porch of her house, where she lives with 5 of her 6 children. Billy, the oldest, lives away, with his father's family in a house about a 10-minute walk away.

She initially hesitated to speak with me, and with good reason. She had just met me a few hours prior and there I was asking to hear her life's story. I explained to her the purpose of my research and the reason that, to me, it was particularly important to hear from women and mothers regarding their experiences as migrants. I told her that I wanted to help ensure that her story was told and that if she wanted me to, I could simply use a different name. Or, that if she did not feel comfortable, she did not have to speak with me at all and that I would completely understand.[37]

Our ideas about migration, as most features of our modern world, in addition to being racialized are also gendered and as such tend to give more importance or relevance to men. Particularly in the case of Haitian migration, literature tends to lack focus on women specifically, putting more emphasis, for instance, on the men who were brought to the Dominican Republic to work as sugarcane cutters.[38] However, much less attention has been given specifically to Haitian women who also migrated under different terms. Although, as Samuel Martinez (1995) points out, some Haitian women, while few, also work as sugarcane cutters, particularly because "other employment for women is in short supply and is grossly underpaid."[39] But their terms of migration were still different, as there were no bi-national arrangements for impoverished Black Haitian women to be brought to

[37] While conducting interviews in the Dominican Republic, I found it more difficult to establish trust with women than I did with men. My positionality as a cisgender man played a role in how I was perceived by the people with whom I spoke. This is most likely do to the politics of patriarchy and masculinity in Haiti. Men are often more willing to share their thoughts and experiences with other men than women are because of the social implications. For women, speaking to men that they do not know could be perceived as inappropriate behavior. Women could have also seen it as potentially dangerous.

[38] Catanese, Anthony V. Haitians: Migration and Diaspora. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1999.

[39] Martínez, Samuel. *Peripheral Migrants: Haitians and Dominican Republic Sugar Plantations*. 1st ed. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995. Pg. 69

the Dominican Republic. Additionally, under Dominican law, the undocumented status of women is automatically inherited by her children; unless a Dominican father claims the offspring, the blame of the undocumented status of children born on Dominican soil falls disproportionately on Haitian women. Also, the myth of pregnant Haitian women crossing the border and overflowing hospitals in the Dominican Republic has been used as an argument against Haitian migrants and the right to citizenship for Dominicans of Haitian descent. This same argument has also been used in the United States – particularly against Latin American women – by those who call for a change to the nation's laws on citizenship. Dominican society also tends to espouse conservative social values, and thus the experiences of migrants who do not conform to traditional ideas of gender or sexuality may also encounter particular challenges that may go unnoticed without further investigation. Future projects would do well to focus particular attention on the experiences of women and gender nonconforming people.

Lucia's son, who was present in case she needed him to explain something in Kreyòl that she did not understand in Spanish, talked to her some more and explained to her a bit more about the type of questions he heard me ask while on the bridge. She slowly warmed up to speaking with me.

Before I could ask her any questions, she began:

> *Look, Dominicans don't have respect for Haitians.*
>
> *I've always travelled with my passport with a visa on it, to avoid any problems.*
>
> *If anyone ever asked me about my legal status in the country, I would have the proof right there to show that I was in the country legally.*

Dominicans have God. And Haitians also have the same God.

If a Dominican or a Haitian get cut, we both bleed the same red blood.

But, Dominicans think that they are people, while Haitians are like dogs, animals that can be treated any which way.

One day in Dajabón, when I went to sell in the market, as I bent down to arrange my merchandise, a Dominican man passed by and grabbed me in between my legs.

A look of anger overcame her face as she shared this memory.

With all the might I had, I turned around and slapped him on the face. "Una galletada", she exclaimed, as Dominicans call "slaps."

Dominicans don't have respect for Haitians.

Another time, a Dominican who was going to buy merchandise from me in the market didn't want to pay and then pulled a knife on me to threaten me and get away without paying.

I've talked about this with many Dominican friends and even the Dominican family members I have and even they agree with me that, generally, Dominicans don't have respect for Haitians.

People in Haiti have to work hard, but in the Dominican Republic they have to work even harder and the pay isn't even good. Sometimes they don't even get paid.

Haitian people in the Dominican Republic often have to endure great hardships and calamities.

I then asked Lucia, "why do people migrate to the Dominican Republic"?

With much anger and with very large gestures, the sweet lady I met earlier in the day said:

> *The problem is that the politicians in Haiti don't work on behalf of the people. If Haiti had good leaders things would be better. The problem is here in Haiti. The politicians and diplomats work for their own money. Not for their people. It is the very politicians that give the opportunity for Dominicans to treat Haitians the way that they do.*

With much frustration she continued:

> *I don't want to have problems. I just want my children to have their papers up to date.*
>
> *I want to have those papers in my hands so I can have peace!*

She shared the story of how in 2013 she went to the hospital where her son was born, acquired the original copy of Billy's birth certificate and later took it to the Central Electoral Commission (Junta Nacional Electoral). There they took 3 months to look over the paperwork to verify that they were legitimate and to confirm that Billy was in fact Dominican.

> *After three months, the papers arrived from the capital. The people at the Junta then told me to come to declare my muchacho (boy). They also warned me to keep the original document in a very safe place because that paper is the only proof you have and the only paper that can be used for anything official.*
>
> *If the paper is left outside, anyone could take it and sell it or do whatever with it.*

My mother always asks me, "why, when you have family in the Dominican Republic who are from here, do you still want to live in Haiti?"

I tell her I don't want any trouble. I don't want my children to have any problems. Here they don't have to live with the uncertainty that the police will pick them up and take them far away. Right now, even kids in the Dominican Republic will have to go out in the streets carrying their papers. This is a big problem. When I saw four guards pick up Haitian people from the streets in Santiago and throw them in the truck, I felt very bad. This was something that hurt me in my heart.

In the middle of her story, Lucia turned to Billy and started to reprimand him in Kreyòl. I could not entirely understand, so I was not sure if maybe she was upset because of my presence. After a few moments of uncertainty, she turned to me and explained that Billy's birth certificate had gone missing. She was yelling at him because he had it last, since he had been asked to bring it to school. She expressed that she was very concerned about whether Billy would be able to claim his citizenship when he turned 18 in two years. Her biggest concern was for her children's wellbeing and future.

She said she had decided to move back to Haiti for good a year and 3 months prior. At the moment, I decided not to ask what motivated her to choose to move because I thought the question might provoke a painful memory, and I did not want to cause her any more pain than I already had.

Lucia went on to share that she had lived most of her life in Santiago and had moved back and forth for 16 years. Her skills as a baker allowed her to find decent work. She was

born in Haiti, to a Dominican mother and a Haitian father. She is one of 9 siblings and the only who was born in Haiti. The rest of her siblings were born in the Dominican Republic and they all still live there. When she was 8 years old, her parents moved to the Dominican Republic, where they lived in a *batey* outside of Santiago.

I later noticed that when he offered his name, Billy decided also to mention his mother's last name. Here it is very common simply to give your first last name – your father's last name. But, for him, it was important to acknowledge his relationship to his mother and make it as evident as possible. He later told me that his father, who is a Dominican, had abandoned his mother when she was still pregnant with him. He said he has never met his father and has never heard from him. His father's family, though, did decide to acknowledge him, and insisted that he go live with them. For this reason, he lives with them and not with his mother. He is also in contact with Dominican family members in Santiago. He hopes that they will be able to vouch for him and help him finally obtain his citizenship when he turns 18.

Through their story, Lucia and Billy highlight several important aspects about the politics of citizenship, gender, and race. Despite having the legal right to live in the Dominican Republic, they still face concerns regarding how they are treated or could be treated because of their Haitian ancestry. Because a large percentage of Haiti's population is black, to say "Haitian" is often to say "black." And although neither Lucia nor Billy mentioned race in general nor blackness in particular, I contend that the way they are racialized has an impact on the type of experiences they have in both nations.

BLACKNESS AND BELONGING IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

On July 10, 2015, Maribel Núñez Valdez – an Afro-Dominican activist I met at an event in Santo Domingo – uploaded a video to YouTube that she had recorded that same morning.[40] After witnessing a Dominican man make disparaging comments toward a black, Haitian man who was leaving a convenience store, she decided to briefly interview the unidentified man on camera. The following is a partial transcript of the conversation:

> Maribel: *So you don't consider yourself black?*
> **Interviewee: *I am not black. It's not that I don't consider myself. I am not Black.***

He then goes on to exclaim, in English, *"I am brown!"*, and reinforces this statement by lifting his right forearm and kissing it in a celebratory manner.

> Maribel: *And where do you get that categorization, that you are not black?*
>
> **Interviewee: *I am not black.***
>
> Maribel: *But have you looked at your nose and your mouth?*

In a euphemistic way, Interviewee responds: *"My mouth is a good mouth. In every sense I use it how it should be used."* He laughs mischievously.

> Maribel: *But why don't you want to appear to be black?*
>
> **Interviewee: *Because I am not black. It's not that I don't want to. I am not.***
> **…**
> **Interviewee continues: *"It is not that I don't appear to be. I am not black!"***

He underscores the latter part of the previous statement by raising and lowering a semi-closed fist, in a gesture commonly made in Latin America as a way to state that this sentence is definitive, a metaphorical period at the end of a paragraph.

Unsatisfied with his response and seeking to hear the reasoning behind his categorical statement, Maribel presses further: *"But why don't you want to appear to be black?"*

Somewhat annoyed, but still willing to engage,
Interviewee states: *"Notice what all the black things are used for."*

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[40] Núñez Valdez, Maribel. *Yo soy marrón. Me siento aplastado cuando me dicen negro*, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZtiMVNsD10

Maribel responds: *"Oh, so that's why you don't want to be associated with what is black? You think it is bad to be black?"*

Interviewee: *"It's not that it is bad. Because the tires on a car are black and with those black tires, cars work well. Do you understand?"* He then turns to Maribel and nods his head as if to see if the response had been enough for her.

Maribel further asks: *"And what do you feel when you are called black?"*

He looks up and thinks for a moment before responding

Interviewee: *"I feel crushed. Because all the black things are for.... All the things that are meant to withstanding shocks and physical strain are black. I wasn't born for that. The creator made me a being who is free, with a color that is beeeeeeeautiful!"*

He once again kisses his forearm to demonstrate the sense of pride his skin tone gives him. In English he once more exclaims, *"Brown!"*

…

Interviewee: *Don't come to me with that story of black vs. white. Those are lies.*

Maribel continues to push him: *"But what comes to my attention most is that you don't consider yourself Black."*

Interviewee: *"I am not black. Nor do I want to be black. Black is for, damn, for all the things that are forced. You know? Look at the tires on that car. What color are they? Tell me what color are they?!"*

As he continues, a darker-skinned man approaches a nearby establishment, he appears to be wearing a uniform from a water delivery company.

Interviewee explains loudly, perhaps even loud enough for the man to hear:

"That man that goes there, what does he do? He is black. but I am not."

Maribel then continues the interview: *"Speaking seriously, is your grandmother black?"*

Interviewee: *No. My grandmother was a lady who was very beautiful. What happened was that...*

Maribel cuts him off and says, *"So are you implying that black can't be beautiful?"*

Interviewee pauses and thinks for a moment and responds: ***"I didn't say that. My grandmother made the mistake of messing with a 'viejo del diablo feisimo' - a man of the devil who was very ugly."***

Maribel adds: *"... who was black."*

Interviewee: "*Yes, the old man was black.*"

Maribel adds: *"So, from him you inherit your blackness, but you deny it."*

Interviewee turns back, quickly gets up from his chair, and yells out: ***"I said that I'm not black! Are you going to offend me again? Or are you trying to make me feel uncomfortable?!"***

Maribel laughs, defusing the brief moment of tension. She replies: *"And you take that as an offense?"*

Interviewee: ***"It is an offense. If you call me black, it's like you're calling me Haitian or you are calling me a wheel from a car. Are you going to continue messing with that nonsense?"***

Maribel: *"But you inherited being black from that man who got married with your grandmother."*

Interviewee: ***She made a mistake.***
…

Maribel: *And what region of the country are you from?*

Interviewee: "*Region? I'm not from a region. I am from a city.*"

Maribel: *"From what city?"*

Interviewee: ***"San Cristobal, the city of 'El Jefe' 'The boss', with much pride."***

Maribel: "*And who is 'the boss'?"*

Interviewee: ***"Trujillo! Has there been here another boss!? Because the ones who have existed since haven't been bosses. They have been garbage! Scum! Do you want me to say more?!"***

Maribel: *"That is to say that at this stage in the game you are still giving praises to the Dictator Trujillo."*

Interviewee: ***"Trujillo was a dictator. But he was better. He was more serious, damn, than the disgusting ones who have come since."***

This brief interview provides a valuable window through which hegemonic ideas about race in the Dominican Republic can be analyzed. Scholar Lorgia Garcia-Peña warns that in order to understand the role of blackness in the Dominican Republic, one must "understand that the task of translating blackness is intrinsically linked to Dominican ethnic identity and to the island's economic and political negotiations with the United States and Europe."[41] She briefly outlines Dominican colonial history, highlighting that after much of the island's gold had been extracted, the wealthier, whiter Spanish colonizers began to leave the island and headed, instead, toward what is now known as Central and South America.

According to Garcia-Peña, as early as 1608 "the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo began to see what some historians have called a "de facto emancipation."[42] By the eighteenth century, the French and Spanish colonies each had consolidated distinct economies. The French colony distinguished itself as a brutally-efficient sugar plantation. The Spanish colony shifted its primary mode of production to cattle ranching.[43] The differences in modes of production on the two colonies led to vast differences in population formation. According to the Library of Congress, by the end of the 18th century,

[41] García-Peña, Lorgia. "Translating Blackness." *The Black Scholar* 45, no. 2 (April 3, 2015): 10–20. doi:10.1080/00064246.2015.1012993 Pg. 12
[42] García-Peña, Lorgia. 2015. Pg. 12
[43] Candelario, Ginetta E. B. 2007. Black behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops. Durham: Duke University Press Books. Pg. 4

approximately 60,000 enslaved black people had been brought to the Dominican Republic from the African continent. They accounted for about a third of the population. On the other side of the island, at least 500,000 black people had been brought by the French, accounting for the vast majority of the population.[44] Dominican historian Frank Moya Pons further documents that, by the time the Spanish colony had established cattle ranching as its primary mode of production, there were large groups of freedmen and women who "despite their color" not only considered themselves "different from the slaves whom they saw as the only blacks of the island," but as the "whites of the land."[45]

Thus, blackness began to acquire distinct meanings for Dominicans. And, as the man in the interview above stated, blackness generally began to be associated with hard labor, oppression and dehumanization. However, Dominican historian Franklin Franco documents that well into the 18th century, "slave labor was the basis of production." In fact, he cites priest Antonio Sánchez Valverde who argued in 1785 that granting freedom to "disorderly slaves" was: "filling the towns with thieves, prostitutes, and perpetrators of vice, and is taking away the most useful workers."[46] As the interview above demonstrates, ideas about blackness and its "rightful place" in society – doing hard physical labor – have continued to exist. And, as I will later explore, the Dictator Rafael Trujillo played an

[44] Silver, Alexandra. 2010. "Haiti and the Dominican Republic: A Tale of Two Countries." Time, January 19. Retrieved May 11, 2015 (http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1953959,00.html)
[45] Moya Pons, Frank. 1995. The Dominican Republic: A National History. New Rochelle, N.Y: Hispaniola Books. Pg. 16
[46] Franco, Franklin J. *Blacks, Mulattos, and the Dominican Nation*. Classic Knowledge in Dominican Studies. New York: Routledge, 2015. Pg 52, 53

important role in reifying those ideas in the 20th century. However, it is important to understand the colonial roots that led to the construction of blackness.

THE DIALECTIC OF BLACKNESS AND CITIZENSHIP

In her text *Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom*, Caribbean theorist Sylvia Wynter employs Michel Foucault's genealogical method to explore the ways in which different "descriptive terms" of humanity have been historically constructed, and how they have impacted black subjects in particular. She presents several dialectics that contributed to a first and a second definition of what it meant to be a man, as well as the way in which these ideas contributed to the establishment of modern science. Ultimately, Wynter demonstrates that the mainstream sciences are often used to exclude the black subjects from the possibility of existing as human. Wynter shows that there has been a historical conception of the "Christian as that of Man in two forms: The first from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century; the second from then on until today…"[47] These "re-inventions" made possible the rise of "the physical sciences (in the wake of the invention of Man1), and then of the biological sciences (in the wake of the nineteenth century invention of Man2)"[48] The human went from being primarily the subject of the Church, to being the political subject of the state. Rationality became the distinctive marker

[47] Wynter, Sylvia. "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337. doi:10.1353/ncr.2004.0015. Pg. 264
[48] Ibid. Wynter 2003. Pg. 264

of Man1.[49] These events, she points out, were made possible through the Europeans' need to legitimize their decision to colonize lands that were already inhabited, and enslave African people, as both the native and the African would go on to serve the role of Other/non-human to the Europeans' "descriptive statement" of humanity, through which they conceived themselves[50]. The over-representation of the white European as the "default" Man made their presence the valid one, and invalidated others; their skin color and other physical features, their ontology, culture and everything that represents them became invisible and what Charles W. Mills and Nirmar refer to as the "somatic norm."[51][52]

Wynter's conceptualization on the coloniality of being outlines the ways in which various socio-historical changes occurred as Europe became a hegemonic power that would go on to colonize the Western Hemisphere and Africa. These changes, if not sparked, were accelerated after 1492, when the Spanish colonization of the island of Hispaniola started. Of particular significance is the fact that only Europeans participated in these debates. Their ideas would be the ones that led to the establishment of the modern world, yielding, among other results, the establishment of modern nation-states. Their ideas would also be the ones used to justify the dehumanization and exploitation of indigenous and black people. And despite the contradictory nature of some of these ideas, they continue to carry significant weight in our contemporary world.

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[49] Wynter, Sylvia. 2003. Pg. 265,266
[50] Ibid. 2003. Pg. 265
[51] Mills. *The Racial Contract*. 1st New edition edition. Cornell University Press, 1999. Pg. 61
[52] Puwar, Nirmal. *Space Invaders : Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. 1st ed. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004. Pg. 33

In 1971, political philosopher John Rawls, published *A Theory of Justice* (1971), a highly influential book in which he postulated distributive justice, conceiving justice as "fairness". He follows the social contract tradition of Enlightenment philosophers (17th, 18th centuries) such as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Immanuel Kant.[53] As a metaphor, the social contract serves as a way to conceptualize the way an ideal society should be organized. That is, citizens within a particular society enter into a contract through which they submit to the authority of the state, which is then charged with protecting the rights of all individuals. The social contract was invoked in the United States Declaration of independence (1776), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1793), the Haitian Constitution (1801), and the Constitution of the Dominican Republic (1844). As such, the social contract provided the framework through which modern nation-states would come to be instituted. Rawls' book reignited a debate over the social contract tradition, advancing social justice as a central tenant that was previously undertheorized. Rawls' ideas have been followed by thinkers behind numerous liberal democracies, particularly influencing social democratic political projects.

Following also the social contract tradition, and engaging with Rawls' work in particular, philosopher Charles W. Mills argues that modern liberal democracies are currently organized around a contract which, "though based on the social contract tradition that has been central to Western political theory, is not a contract between everybody ("we the people"), but between just the people who count, the people who really are people ("we

[53] Philosopher Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze tracks the way in which philosophers like Kant and Hegel often based some of their own theoretical work on ideas about the inherent inferiority and superiority of certain races. Eze, Emmanuel Chukwudi. 2001. Pgs. 23,24

the white people"). So it is a Racial Contract."[54] Mills points out the profound contradictions in political projects that affirmed the equality of all men, while at the same time continued to rely on the institution of oppressive structures such as racial chattel slavery. Mills himself follows the work of feminist philosopher Carole Pateman (1981), who demonstrates that modern patriarchy, the social and political subordination of women, is institutionalized through what she calls a sexual contract.

Mills points out that in Rawls' work, and in secondary literature on his work, there has been a lack of adequate consideration to the important role that race has played, and continues to play, in our modern world. He centers his critique largely on the United States, which has had a long history of racial injustice with which the nation still struggles to contend, as evidenced by the disproportionately large number of black people who are currently incarcerated, the enormous wealth gap between black and white households, among various others systemic injustices that disproportionately affect black people in the country. Black Americans were not granted membership as citizens until the 1960s, although some would argue that black Americans still have not attained full citizenship.[55][56] However, what Mills further points to is that it is not enough simply to make an amendment to a social contract that is deeply flawed and contradictory from its inception. That is, a constitutional amendment is not enough to restructure what he considers to be the unnamed, global political system of white supremacy. Regarding the constitutional

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[54] Mills. *The Racial Contract*. 1st New edition edition. Cornell University Press, 1999. Pg. 3

[55] Wilderson, III, Frank B. "The Prison Slave as Hegemony's (Silent) Scandal." *Social Justice* 30, no. 2 (92) (January 1, 2003): 18–27.

[56] Hartman, Saidiya V. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. 1 edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Pg. 12

amendments that sought to uphold the rights of black Americans, scholars Carole Boyce Davies and Babacar M'Bow (2007) point out that "… neither of these amendments have undone the scape hatch of imprisonment by which a technical denial of citizenship and slavery remains in effect."[57]

Mill's and Pateman's thoughts about the racial and sexual contracts are in line with that of theorist Sylvia Wynter, who demonstrates the way in which structures of domination came to be established and crystallized after colonization, leading to the white, European colonizers "overrepresentation of their conception of the human… thereby coming to invent, label, and institutionalize the indigenous peoples of the Americas as well as the transported enslaved black Africans as the physical referent of the projected irrational/subrational Human Other to its civic-humanist, rational self-conception."[58] Political theorist Neil Roberts, whose work is further analyzed in the following chapter, points out that these hierarchies each lead to various experiences of liminality through which the normative human's way of life was supported. "Epistemes naturalize cultural constructs to the advantage of normative agents' structuring of rules, regulations, and laws of governance."[59]

Recalling here Lucia's story for a moment, one of the moments that comes off as particularly shocking is the sexual attack she suffered while working as a merchandise vendor in the Dominican Republic. Following also the ideas of Mills and Pateman,

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[57] Davies, Carole Boyce, and Carol Boyce. *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*. Edited by Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods. Toronto, Ont. : Cambridge, Mass: South End Press, 2007. Pg. 20
[58] Wynter, Sylvia. 2003. Pg. 281-282
[59] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Freedom as Marronage. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pg. 160

anthropologist Christen A. Smith argues that "black women's bodies are seen as violable in part because black femaleness is always already marked as outside the social contract and thus, by extension, outside the moral social order."[60] "*We are treated like dogs*," four different black Haitian people I interviewed said to me regarding their experiences in the Dominican Republic. Muriel, a young Haitian man who I met outside the Ministry of Interior and Police also said "*Haitian people are treated like old rags that are discarded once they are old and no longer needed.*" The subordination of black Haitian people and their placement outside the social contract allows for, and normalizes, their treatment as animals or, worse yet, as objects. Furthermore, the relatively recent[61][62] reliance on the label "illegal" to describe the presence of undocumented people within a nation-state asserts that their own humanity is located outside the social contract and is, thus, also violable in every way that a citizen would, otherwise, be protected. In other words, the "illegalization" of Haitian people tacitly allows for their wages to be stolen and for women to be sexually attacked without even remorse from their abusers. Furthermore, as theorist David Goldberg argues, in modern nation-states, race and gender, among other signifiers, "become the mark of social belonging, the measure of standing in the nation-state, the badge of social subjection and citizenship."[63]

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[60] Smith, Christen A. "Putting Prostitutes in Their Place Black Women, Social Violence, and the Brazilian Case of Sirlei Carvalho." *Latin American Perspectives* 41, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 107–23. doi:10.1177/0094582X13492141. Pg. 108

[61] Chomsky, Aviva. Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal. Boston: Beacon Press, 2014.

[62] Sassen, Saskia. "The Repositioning of Citizenship: Emergent Subjects and Spaces for Politics." Berkeley Journal of Sociology 46 (2002): 4–26. Pg. 4

[63] Goldberg, David Theo. *The Racial State*. 1 edition. Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001. Pg. 9-10

On the island of Hispaniola – as named by the Spanish colonizers who subjugated and contributed to the extermination of the local Taíno indigenous population on the island[64] – the social contracts advanced by Jean Jacques Dessalines[65] and Juan Pablo Duarte, the men recognized as national founding fathers respectively in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, were upended shortly after the nations were founded. In Haiti, Jean Jacques Dessalines, who ruled as an emperor mirroring Napoleon's own self-appointment as emperor, was likely assassinated after challenging the right to land ownership of the mulatto elite.[66] The Haitian constitutions, despite introducing provisions guaranteeing racial equality, in practice were also deeply contradictory.[67] Juan Pablo Duarte[68] was sent into exile by General Pedro Santana, who became the nation's first dictator.[69] According to a recent worldwide comparative study on endurance of national constitutions, "at the extreme, the island of Hispaniola, home to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, has been the setting for nearly 7% of the world's constitutions and perennial governmental instability."[70]

The social contract is employed as a way to establish a legitimate state as a form of government to which all citizens can submit with the common goal of building the nation. As such, it is also the foundation for modern "citizenship", or the official membership a

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[64] Blaut, J. M. The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History. 1 edition. New York: The Guilford Press, 1993. Pg. 183

[65] Although the first constitution enacted in Haiti was the one promulgated by Toussaint Louverture in 1801, Dessaline's was the first after independence.

[66] Joseph, Celucien L. *Haitian Modernity and Liberative Interruptions: Discourse on Race, Religion, and Freedom*. Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2014. Pgs. 124, 125

[67] Fischer, Sibylle. Modernity disavowed: Haiti and the cultures of slavery in the age of revolution. Duke University Press, 2004. Pg. 267

[68] Quoted in the opening epigraph of this chapter

[69] Fearon, James, and David Laitin. "Dominican Republic." (2005). Pg 2

[70] Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg, and James Melton. *The Endurance of National Constitutions*. Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pg. 2

person has within the nation. However, for many subjects within a nation-state, the social contract through which the nation is governed becomes meaningless discourse when the governing laws are not applied equally for all subjects. When this happens the state begins to lose its legitimacy. This is part of what John Rawls points to with his theory of justice. In Rawls own words: "... institutions are just when no arbitrary distinctions are made between persons in the assigning of basic rights and duties and when the rules determine a proper balance between competing claims to the advantages of social life."[71] This is in line with what Dominican founding father, Juan Pablo Duarte, wrote in the epigraph that opens this chapter: "Every Dominican power is and should be always limited by the law and the law by justice, which consists in giving each person what, by right, belongs to them."[72] The introduction of arbitrariness into the way laws are applied is what leads to an unjust state. This is also what Pateman and Mills have pointed to regarding the position that women and racialized minorities occupy within many modern nation-states. They are often subjects to national projects that fails to effectively include them and protect their rights as members of the nation, allowing, instead, for arbitrary use of power that leads to exclusions and injustices. Many scholars – including Drake (1993), Du Bois (1994), Gordon and Anderson (1999), Smith (2016), among others – view being outside the social contract as one of the elements that, as a legacy of the colonization of the Americas and of Africa, are common to black people as members of the African Diaspora. Furthermore, Boyce Davies

[71] Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, US: Harvard University Press, 2009. Pg. 5
[72] Duarte, Juan Pablo, Vetilio Alfau Durán, and Juan Pablo Duarte. 2006. Pg. 24

and M'Bow (2007) assert that "...nation-state citizenship for black people anywhere in the diaspora is a fragile and mutable condition."[73]

On June 26, 2015 www.reconoci.do, a Dominican organization of Dominicans of Haitian descent held a press conference to deny the government's claim that the citizenship of 55,000 people had been restored.[74] Several members of the organization had stopped by the Central Electoral Commission to acquire their documents but were still denied. After the conference, Rosa Iris Diendomi Alvarez, one of the organization's leaders said to me that in her view, within the Dominican nation-state currently "*there is no legal certainty.*" During a later interview, Sirana Dolis of the Movement of Dominican-Haitian Women (Movimiento de Mujeres Dominico-Haitianas- MUDHA) also posited the rhetorical question: "*if you have a right, but you cannot access it, do you really have that right?*"

Given the long history of constitutional instability in the Dominican Republic, Juan Telemín, a Dominican activist of Haitian descent who was affected by the 2013 constitutional ruling but has since been able to fight to have his citizenship restored, expressed what he believes to be the primary, long-term concern for Dominicans of Haitian descent is:

> *We see with what is going on now, with the transcriptions and the creation of the new registry, the consummation of a project that has been carried out by the Dominican state for many years now with the aim that Dominicans of Haitian descent – the people of Haitian parents born in the country – have limitations with*

[73] Davies, Carole Boyce, and Carol Boyce. 2007. Pg. 21
[74] Press, The Associated. "Dominican Republic Certifies Citizenship of 55,000." WSLS, June 27, 2015. http://wsls.com/ap/dominican-republic-certifies-citizenship-of-55000/.

everything related to society at large; social integration. .... in the long term, it could come to pass that someone with perverse ideas decides to simply eliminate everyone in that book. It is a way to put us aside so that whenever they want to, they will already know who they have there, and who they will remove. You understand? That situation could happen.

Dominicans of Haitian descent whose citizenship was called into question in 2013 did not have their citizenship restored. Instead, they were re-registered under a new, separate book. This is why Billy at the beginning of this chapter mentions that his birth certificate was marked as "birth certificate for a foreigner." Within two years of registration, Dominicans of Haitian descent are then supposed to register for citizenship. But as Billy, Rosa, Sirana, and Juan have expressed, many questions still linger regarding how this process will unfold in the coming years, and what the long-term implications will be. However, as I have argued elsewhere, a critique on the state should not, necessarily, also be considered a critique on the nation.[75] And, it is also important to keep in mind that there are other responsible parties in the current citizenship predicament.

THE LEGACY OF THE UNITED STATES OCCUPATIONS OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND HAITI

In the beginning of the 1900s, both Haiti and the Dominican Republic were occupied/invaded, by the United States Marines. In 1930, a few years after the first U.S.

[75] Romain, Jheison. "Confusion, Citizenship and Human Rights in the Dominican Republic." *Latino Rebels*, July 13, 2015. http://www.latinorebels.com/2015/07/13/confusion-citizenship-and-human-rights-in-the-dominican-republic/.

invasion/occupation of the Dominican Republic ended, Dictator Rafael Trujillo rose to power. He would lead the Dominican state until 1961. Regarding the Trujillo dictatorship, Puerto Rican Historian Teresita Martinez-Vergne (2005) wrote:

> Claiming itself responsible for restoring the material and cultural well-being of the country after the U.S. occupation, the Trujillo regime produced a version of Dominicanness that set the eastern part of the island apart from its neighbor…. Dominicans declared themselves white (not black), Hispanic (not African), and Catholic (not Vodou practitioners)."[76]

Martinez-Vergne further suggests that part of the motives for the Trujillo regime to deploy this nationalist discourse in opposition to Haitians was to move closer to "the West" and to manipulate Haitians as "a cheap labor force."[77] As Dominican scholar Silvio Torres-Saillant (2000) suggests:

> It is not inconceivable, for instance, that the texture of negrophobic and anti-Haitian nationalist discourse sponsored by official spokespersons in the Dominican state may have drawn significantly from North American sources dating back to the first years of the republic.[78]

The Dominican anti-Haitian nationalism reached its height in 1937, when 15,000 to 20,000 black people were massacred along the Dominican-Haitian border, at the order of dictator Rafael Trujillo, who sought to enforce the new border drawn during the U.S.

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[76] Martínez-Vergne, Teresita. *Nation and Citizen in the Dominican Republic, 1880-1916*. 1 edition. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Pg 18
[77] Ibid. Pg. 18
[78] Torres-Saillant, Silvio. "The Tribulations of Blackness: Stages in Dominican Racial Identity." *Callaloo* 23, no. 3 (July 1, 2000): 1086–1111. (Pg. 1088)

occupation.[798081] As Edward Paulino and Scherezade García point out, all the victims were not Haitian migrants; some were Dominicans of Haitian descent.[82] There were no consequences and justice was never served after this state-ordered genocidal act. According to historians, Trujillo managed to settle the matter with an out-of-court cash indemnity which, after payouts to Haitian public figures, left each survivor about "two cents a head."[83]

In 2011 Dominicans and Haitians came together at the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti to commemorate this event for the first time, through a ceremony they called the Border of Lights.[84] After the massacre took place in 1937, though, the dictatorship would go on to "produce an ample scholarship directed to demonizing Haitians and, thereby, justifying the unspeakable act."[85] Julian Perez, a former member of the Trujillo regime, in response to the massacre wrote:

> Trujillo was not alone responsible for what finally took place… he was trapped by circumstances… The Haitians always evaded solving the conflict and insisted in

[79] Torres-Saillant, Silvio. 2000. Pg.1093
[80] Candelario, Ginetta E. B. *Black behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2007. Pg. 14
[81]Wucker, Michele. *Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians, and the Struggle for Hispaniola*. 1st ed. New York: Hill and Wang, 1999. Pg. 44
[82] Paulino, Edward, and Scherezade García. "Bearing Witness to Genocide: The 1937 Haitian Massacre and Border of Lights." *Afro - Hispanic Review* 32, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 111-118-159. Pg. 111
[83] Heinl, Robert Debs, Nancy Gordon Heinl, and Michael Heinl. *Written in Blood: The Story of the Haitian People, 1492-1995*. [3rd ed] newly And expanded. Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2005. Pg. 482
[84] Paulino, Edward, and Scherezade García. 2013.
[85] Torres-Saillant, Silvio. 2000. Pg. 1093

> making it worse… Trujillo assumed the historical responsibility, and Dominicans defended the name and the honor of the Republic.[86]

Thus, this anti-Haitian and anti-black genocidal act is explained away as an act of patriotism through which the nation was being protected. Joaquín Balaguer, an ideologue of the Trujillo dictatorship – who would go on to become president for several terms – later wrote in defense of this event that it was an effort to promote the "Dominicanization of the border regions" as one of several measures to "rescue our spirit and defend the spirit of nationality."[87]

However, this act does not represent the sentiments of all Dominican elites at the time. In a letter written in 1943, during the Trujillo dictatorship, Dominican intellectual Juan Bosch wrote:

> Nuestro deber como dominicanos que formamos parte de la humanidad es defender al pueblo haitiano de sus explotadores, con igual ardor que al pueblo dominicano de los suyos. – Our duty as Dominicans who form part of humanity is to defend the Haitian people from their oppressors, with the same passion as the Dominicans people from theirs.[88]

Bosch led the opposition to Trujillo's repressive regime. He would go on to be elected president in 1963 and enacted a new constitution, influenced by social democratic

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[86] Pérez, Luis Julian. 1990. *Santo Domingo Frente Al Destino*. 2 ed. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: La Fundación Universitaria Dominicana, Inc. : La Universidad Nacional Pedro Henríquez Ureña. Pg. 99

[87] Balaguer, Joaquín, and Jorge Tena Reyes. *Joaquín Balaguer: Premio Nacional de Literature, 1990*. Colección Premio Nacional de Literatura. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Ediciones de la Fundación Corripio, 2001. Pg. 132

[88] Bosch, Juan, ed. *República Dominicana Y Haití: El Derecho a Vivir*. Primera edición. Colección Bosch Vive, no. 9. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Fundación Juan Bosch, 2014. Pg. 39

principles. However, his presidency and constitution were both short-lived, as he was removed from power through a military coup within months of being in office. In 1965 his supporters attempted to reinstate him; however, the United States prevented this by once-again invading the nation.[89]

After Trujillo's assassination in 1961, Joaquín Balaguer continued to institutionalize anti-Hatianism, Negrophobia, and Hispanophilia. He rose to the presidency in 1966, where he served until 1978 and again in 1988-1996.[90] In one of his books, the former president called for the implementation of measures to stop "the africanization of the Dominican people" in order for the population to "gradually improve its anthropological traits."[91] He wrote of the Haitian population as a "biological threat."[92] And, in regards to black Haitian sugarcane workers he asserted:

> Durante el tiempo en que permanecen en territorio dominicano, muchos de esos individuos procrean hijos que aumentan la población negra del pais y contribuyen a corromper su fisonomía étnica. – During the time they remain in Dominican territory, many of those individuals procreate children who increase the black

[89] Lowenthal, Abraham F.. 1970. "The United States and the Dominican Republic to 1965: Background to Intervention". Caribbean Studies 10 (2). Institute of Caribbean Studies, UPR, Rio Piedras Campus: 30–55. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25612211. Pgs. 38, 52

[90] Candelario, Ginetta. 2007. Pg. 21

[91] Balaguer, Joaquín. *La isla al revés: Haití y el destino dominicano*. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Fundación José Antonio Caro, 1983. Pg. 45

[92] Balaguer, Joaquín, and Jorge Tena Reyes. *Joaquín Balaguer: Premio Nacional de Literature, 1990*. Colección Premio Nacional de Literatura. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Ediciones de la Fundación Corripio, 2001. Pg. 99-100

population of the country and contribute to the corruption of its ethnic physiognomy.[93]

Martinez-Vergne also points out regarding the construction of Dominican nationalism that "the mechanism they used to create a sense of belonging… was not a shared past, but rather a common destiny. The Dominican past, in fact, might not have been 'usable.'"[94]

Regarding the United States occupation of both nations on the island, it is important to recall that black subjects within the United States were not respected as citizens at the time of those interventions; why would foreign nationals under military occupation – who would also be racialized as black – be treated any better? The occupation of Haiti took place from 1915 until 1934; the occupation of the Dominican Republic lasted from 1916 until 1924, during a time in which black people were still being lynched in the United States. American military forces were documented as having played soccer with the severed heads of killed resistance fighters in Haiti.[95] In the Dominican Republic, scholar Lorgia García Peña (2008, 2016) has also documented the way in which Afro-Dominican spiritual leaders were disrespected, persecuted and killed.[96][97]

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[93] Balaguer, Joaquín. (2001). Pg. 99-100
[94] Martínez-Vergne, Teresita. 2005. Pg. 19
[95] Danticat, Edwidge. *Brother, I'm Dying*. First Edition edition. New York: Knopf, 2007. Pg. 247
[96] Garcia Pena, Lorgia. "Dominicanidad in Contra (Diction): Marginality, Migration and the Narration of a Dominican National Identity." Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2008. http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/docview/304583118/abstract/FF501EE8D4D74E47PQ/1.
[97] García-Peña, Lorgia. The Borders of Dominicanidad: Race, Nation, and Archives of Contradiction. Duke University Press Books, 2016.

In the biggest affront to the nation's sovereignty, "on June 20, 1918, the U.S. Marines carried out a referendum on a new constitution, giving "foreign residents" and "foreign companies" "full rights to the ownership of property in Haiti.""[98] Laurent Dubois further writes: "As more and more U.S. agricultural companies entered Haiti, they deprived peasants of their land. The result was that, for the first time in its history, large numbers of Haitians left the country, looking for work in nearby Caribbean islands and beyond."[99] In addition to centralizing the country into the city of Port-au-Prince, Georges Anglade also asserts that "the occupation left Haiti to furnish the United States' sugar plantations in Cuba and the Dominican Republic with labor, and it erected the Haitian military-police state system that would assure the stability of the Pax Americana."[100] As a 1926 New York Financial America advertising announced: "Haiti offers a marvelous opportunity for American investment. The run-of-the-mill Haitian is handy, easily directed, and gives a hard day's labor for 20 cents, while in Panama the same day's work cost $3."[101] According to Lauren Derby, "By 1925, most Dominican sugar plantations belonged to foreign corporations, and 98 percent of exports were sold to the United States…. Haitians were imported directly by the sugar concerns as an indentured labor force…"[102] Recalling Dubois' words once more: "Haiti is often described as a 'failed state.' In fact, though, Haiti's state has been quite successful at doing what it was set up to do: preserve power for a small

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[98] Dubois, Laurent. *Haiti: The Aftershocks of History*. 1st ed. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2012. Pg. 247
[99] Dubois, Laurent. 2012. Pg. 9
[100] Anglade, Georges. "Rules, Risks, and Rifts in the Transition to Democracy in Haiti." *Fordham International Law Journal* 20.4 (1996-1997): 1176-1214. Pg 1177
[101] Farmer, Paul. *The Uses of Haiti*. 3rd ed. Monroe, Me: Common Courage Press, 2006. Pg. 83
[102] Derby, Lauren. In Afro-Descendants, Identity, and the Struggle for Development in the Americas, edited by Bernd Reiter and Kimberly Eison Simmons, 51–66. Ruth Simms Hamilton African Diaspora Series. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2012. Pg. 53

group."[103] Thus, it is possible to see what the role of the United States has been in the creation of the current citizenship crisis in the Dominican Republic. It was U.S. interests that brought Haitian laborers to the Dominican Republic. However, once the sugarcane industry began to dwindle, particularly as high fructose corn syrup began to take the place of sugar, large groups of Haitian sugarcane cutters were also left unemployed.[104] To highlight the transnational scope of Haitian migration following the occupation, it is worth recalling that, also in 1937, tens of thousands of Haitian migrants who worked on U.S. owned sugar plantations were also rounded up and deported from Cuba.[105]

After racial chattel slavery was abolished as an institution in the western world, nothing was done to repair the injustices suffered by the formerly enslaved. Instead, the social contracts in place in the newly emerging nations throughout the Western Hemisphere took steps to redress the claims by former slave holders that in setting people free they had suffered large economic losses. For instance, in the case of Haiti, in order for the black nation to receive legal recognition as an independent nation, it was forced to pay an indemnity to its former colonizers in France in the sum of 150 million francs – a figure that crippled the young nation. Invoking the Monroe Doctrine, the United States in 1915 invaded Haiti to ensure that this debt to France was paid.[106][107] In 1947, Haiti was still paying off this crippling debt. Historian David Nicholls argues that the U.S. occupation led

[103] Dubois, Laurent. 2012. Pg. 7
[104] Derby, Lauren. 2012. Pg. 59
[105] Rolando, Gloria, Lucía Huergo, and Ebenezer Semé. *Reembarque =: Reshipment*. AfroCubaWeb.com, 2014.
[106] Wucker, Michele. 1999. Pgs. 100-101
[107] Farmer, Paul. 2006. Pgs. 67-69

also to the restoration of Haiti's mulatto elite to power, which would later provide the impetus for the rise of the infamous dictator François Duvalier under a *noiriste* populism.[108]

As Noam Chomsky has argued regarding the role of the United States as a global superpower, through what he calls the doctrine of "change of course," there's a tendency to believe that what has occurred in the past, as terrible as it may have been, is now different, that we have changed course. This of course makes the past always already irrelevant.[109] But, perhaps we would do well to heed the words of anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot, who reminds us that focusing on 'the past' as a fixed reality "diverts us from the present injustices for which previous generations only set the foundation."[110]

THE ROLE OF THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT

Outside the Haitian embassy in Santo Domingo, Freddy, a young Haitian man in his early 20s, walked among the large crowd of Haitian people who, as the deadline to register in the Dominican regularization plan for foreign immigrants approached, waited at the embassy in order to request or claim the documents they still needed in order to fulfill all the requirements. He offered his services as a shoeshine – a job that is commonly carried out by young Haitian boys and men who simply sought to make enough money to get by. Out in the streets, the sight of young, dark-skinned boys as young as 10-years-old and

[108] Nicholls, David. 1996. From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour and National Independence in Haiti. Rev ed. edition. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.
[109] Farmer, Paul. 2006. Pg. 16
[110] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1995. Pg. 150

presumably Haitian – who carried shoeshine boxes or sold drinks and snacks – was dishearteningly common. Noticeably absent from the streets were young girls. Which, given the prevalence of tourist-oriented child prostitution in the Dominican Republic, led me to assume the worse.[111]

I asked this young man whether he had already been able to complete the regularization process. He shook his head and said he was still trying to save the 5,000 pesos (110 dollars) he would need in order to acquire his passport, but at 10 pesos to 20 pesos per costumer, time was against him; he would have to shine as many as 500 pairs of shoes to meet this goal. He was uncertain about what the regularization plan would really entail. He thought there were still 5 or 6 days left to submit his documents. I corrected him and told him that, in fact, there were just 2 days left. He said it was tough for him to save enough money to get his documents because by shining shoes he barely makes enough to sustain himself and provide some assistance for his parents. "*Es una lucha"* - "It is a struggle," he said. Multiple times he also exclaimed that things are very tough for Haitian immigrants here in the Dominican Republic.

The Haitian embassy in Santo Domingo, as the representative of the Haitian nation-state within the Dominican Republic, played an important role as the regularization process was carried out. One of the requirements for the Dominican regularization plan was that each applicant would present a valid Haitian passport. This put a tremendous amount of pressure on the Haitian government, as it would have to provide as many as 300,000

[111] Cabezas, Amalia L. 2004. Between love and money: Sex, tourism, and citizenship in Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Signs, 29(4), pp.987-1015.

passports in a matter of months, which was simply an impossible task for a government with limited capacity for operation.

Day after day, crowds of Haitian men and women would gather outside the Haitian embassy to seek the passports and birth certificates they needed in order to move forward with the Dominican regularization plan. Across the street from the embassy, a make-shift photo studio was put up for people to take their passport photos. A bed-sheet secured to a wall was used as background, while several suit coats were made available for people to use as they took their photos. On most days, the Red Cross was the institution in charge of organizing the long lines of people. They also ensured that people had access to water as they waited under the hot sun. Abdias Berrouet, a young Haitian man studying medicine in the Dominican Republic who also worked with Red Cross, commented on the regularization plan that, in his view, the entire process was "fictitious." He perceived that the regularization plan generated a much larger demand than was going to be met, particularly in the amount of time allowed for the entire process. After spending some time outside the embassy, the people I met were able to arrange an impromptu meeting with the Ambassador. I met with him along with Jacqueline, a friend who was also present at the embassy that day.

The Haitian Ambassador at the time was Daniel Supplice, who at that point had spent just two months in this role. He mentioned that he had negotiated with the government of the Dominican Republic in order to establish a different, temporary ID card, which would allow people to receive a piece of government-issued documentation other than the passport, the national ID card, or the birth certificate. People would be charged

$1,000 pesos (22 dollars) for this temporary ID card. However, since this change was implemented just two weeks prior to the close of the regularization process, many people were not able to learn about this alternative. I immediately thought about Freddy, the young man I had met a few hours prior. If only he had known about this card, maybe he would have been able to also register.

The ambassador mentioned that in 10 days, 10,000 people had been given the ID card. However, according to him, this was not implemented sooner, not because of a lack of good will from the Haitian government, but because the Dominican Republic did not agree to change these requirements sooner. He mentioned that he has always been vocal about the fact that it was impossible for the Haitian government to print 300,000 passports in a year.

I asked him: "Are you worried about how these events are going to affect people?" He first said "no" and went on to expand on his answer: "you can fight, but I have done about all that I could do. What else could I do at this point?" When asked whether they were somehow working on some sort of plan to deal with the people who would be deported, he said that these were issues being handled by the Haitian government, on that side of the island, so he did not really want to speak about that.

In addition to its role in providing documentation to Haitian nationals, in preparation for the deportation of Haitian people, the government promised to build two return centers where deportees could be temporarily housed as they transitioned back into life in Haiti. However, these centers were never built. Instead, a large, makeshift camp was constructed in the southern Haitian town of Anse-a-Pitri by deportees and by people

who left on their own out of fear of being violently deported. Given the fact that there are still thousands of people who survived the 2010 earthquake living in tent cities in the outskirts of Port-au-Prince, it was unlikely that the Haitian government would do much to aid its citizens living abroad. In fact, some sugarcane cutters who protested outside the Haitian embassy on July 14, 2015 asserted that they have been forgotten by the Haitian nation-state and, after living most of their lives in the Dominican Republic, are instead fighting to gain permanent residency in the Dominican Republic (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Haitian Sugarcane cutters protesting outside the Haitian Embassy in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

While the next chapter contemplates the current conditions in Haiti that have contributed to the on-going crisis, it is also important to consider that, historically, the Haitian state has constantly failed to include all subjects as full citizens. Not providing adequate documentation to all citizens is just one of the failures. As Lucia mentioned, Haitian officials have often worked to seek personal profit at the expense of the masses. For instance, as a result of the bi-national agreement signed by Trujillo and Duvalier,

through which the Haitian state essentially exported impoverished, black Haitian people as laborers, Duvalier himself gained two million dollars in personal profit.[112] And like him, others have also continued to profit from a status quo that keeps impoverished, black Haitian people outside the margins of modern nation-states.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has considered the transnational socio-historical processes that have contributed toward the crystallization of blackness as belonging outside the social contract. Given the significance of recent legislative and constitutional changes in the Dominican Republic, the emphasis of this chapter has been on normative citizenship. Although not explored here, it is also important to consider other aspects of belonging, such as cultural citizenship, especially considering the dominant discourses that posit Dominican and Haitian cultures as vastly different.[113] In this chapter, I have argued that the current citizenship and migration crisis on the island of Hispaniola is, in large part, the legacy of a long history of exploitation and marginalization of black people. Historically, blackness has been a mark of exclusion from modern societies. And as evidenced by recent events in the Dominican Republic, blackness continues to sit at the negative end of dialectic between blackness and full citizenship.

[112] Derby, Lauren. 2012. Pg. 54

[113] It must be acknowledged that Dominican culture also encompasses African elements, as evidenced through the nation's food and music, among other elements.

Undocumented Migration as Marronage

"Built into any system of domination is the tendency to proclaim its own normalcy. To acknowledge resistance as a mass phenomenon is to acknowledge the possibility that something is wrong with the system."

– Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Silencing the Past.[114]

"Si los de arriba no quieren dejarlo a uno levantar, uno a uno debemos unirnos para tratar de levantarnos. Uno sale para buscar trabajo. Si no encuentra, o si el trabajo no da para mantenerse a sí mismo y para mantener la familia, uno se regresa. Lo mal hecho, yo no puedo. El corazón mío no da para hacer eso. Si yo le hago algo malo a usted, yo sé que usted va a sufrir. Si yo veo lo que le pasa a usted y no me duele, no soy persona humana. Tengo un corazón demasiado duro. Si yo veo una persona sufriendo, yo tengo que apoyarla y ayudarla. -- "If those who are on top don't want to help us rise up, one by one, we need to unite, to try to rise up together. You leave to look for work. If you don't find it, or if the work available doesn't provide enough for you to sustain yourself and your family, you return. I can't do things the wrong way. My heart doesn't allow me to do that. If I do something bad to you, I know that you are going to suffer. If I see what you are enduring and it doesn't hurt me, I am not a human being. I have a heart that is too hard. If I see someone suffering, I have to support them and help them."

-- Robert Laguerre

[114] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, c2015. Pg. 84

After the deadline passed for foreign nationals to register under a national regularization plan, the Dominican government announced a two-week grace period to allow undocumented people to leave the country on their own terms. After that, they could be deported at a moment's notice. Less than a month after the June 17th deadline, it was reported that 41,260 men, women and children made their way across the border into Haiti.[115]

A few days after the deadline, I made my way north from Santo Domingo, to the border town of Dajabón, and from there I crossed into Ouanaminthe, Haiti. From the patio of the hotel where I stayed, I could look onto the main road to see a constant flow of cars and trucks entering Haiti, packed beyond capacity with stacks so tall that it was a wonder that all the things stayed in place. Mattresses, chairs, bicycles were just some of the items that could be easily spotted in the stacks. It was fairly evident that these were individuals and families moving back to Haiti with as many of their belongings that they could take.

The process to move to Haiti was a rather expensive one, and it often entailed unforeseen costs that complicated the journey for many. For instance, for a family traveling from Santo Domingo to the border city of Dajabón, bus tickets would cost as much as 340 pesos (7.25 USD) per person. Additional charges would have to be paid for bags beyond the 1-bag-per-traveler limit. The bus companies were making good money. Local transporters in the Dajabón bus station were also profiting from the exodus of Haitian people. Families were being charged anywhere from 400 pesos (8.50 USD) to 800 pesos

[115] Torres, Alicia. "Misión OEA Indaga En Vacacional Haina Situación de Acogida Inmigrantes Haitianos." *NOTICIAS TELEMICRO*. Accessed April 27, 2016. http://noticiastelemicro.com/mision-oea-indaga-en-vacacional-haina-situacion-de-acogida-inmigrantes-haitianos/.

(17 USD) to transport their belongings a short 5-10 minute trip, from the bus stop to the border.

Rossie, who arrived in Dajabón on June 25 with her husband and their daughter, said that, in addition to the elevated transportation costs which they did not exactly plan for, they also had to pay 1,000 pesos (21.25 USD) in customs to clear their belongings.

Mónica Estenio, 24, who was moving to Haiti after living in the Dominican Republic for nearly 15 years, on June 26 moved from Los Alcarrizos, a municipality in the outskirts of Santo Domingo. Accompanying her were her 6-year-old daughter Catiana and her 11-year-old son Willie (Figure 4). She is also bringing with her the belongings her family was able to gather in short notice. She said she attempted to register in the immigrant regularization plan and spent 15 days going to the Ministry of Interior and Police in Santo Domingo to try and register herself and her husband, but was unable to even go inside to begin the process. Like her, countless others were also unable to register in this process, despite having spent money on several of the required documents and waiting in long lines, day after day. She is now leaving the Dominican Republic to avoid what she fears could become a more violent situation later on. "*I don't want to die so soon and leave my children abandoned*," she said.

Her children, who were both born in the Dominican Republic are currently not registered as Dominican citizens. Willie was born prior to the 2007 cut-off set by the Constitutional Tribunal for recognizing children born to undocumented parents, despite the fact that the constitution was changed in 2010. Under the present legal framework, Catiana would not be able to claim Dominican citizenship.

Figure 4: Mónica Estenio (center) and Siranis Pierre (right) wait with their children for transporters to take them from Dajabón across the border into Haiti.

Mónica's husband, who works in construction in Santo Domingo, was not able to travel with them because, according to her, they did not have enough money to pay for the additional trip. For her and her two children, they had to pay $1020 pesos (21.70 USD) just for the tickets. Her husband plans to make the trip in a week's time. "*We are leaving because we are being forced to leave. We are not leaving on our own will. We didn't even have enough time to gather the money we needed to be able to travel*," said Mónica.

She is traveling to Cap-Haïtien with Siranis Pierre, who is also moving back to Haiti with her son Dabens. They know each other from Los Alcarrizos. "*I don't know how anything works over there [In Haiti]. In all honesty, I don't understand any of this,*" confessed Mónica, who is relying on Siranis to guide her in this journey back to a country she does not remember too well.

Siranis attempted to negotiate with the Dominican transporters in Dajabón, explaining to them that they did not have much money left. But the transporters did not budge. That was not their concern. Mónica and Siranis had no choice. They had to pay the amount they were being charged. Meanwhile, one of the transporters taunted Willie, making fun of him because he was about to get left behind. Willie was irritated but neither Siranis nor Mónica could say or do much. In a sense, they were at the transporters' mercy. They had already waited about half an hour out in the sun and saw that they had no other alternative. They each had to pay the $400 pesos for the short trip to customs.

Although these sums might appear small, the minimum wage in the Dominican Republic is 8,000 pesos a month (170 USD). And Haitian laborers are usually hired to do tough jobs for less than the legal minimum wage. In Mónica's case, the trip from her home to the border cost her 2,720 pesos (58 USD), not including anything she might also have to pay in customs. This is a sum that many people are simply not able to pay. This is part of the reason why many, like the community members I met in the outskirts in Santiago,[116] who desired to move back to Haiti had to remain in their communities and hope for conditions for themselves to improve. Nine months after the deportations started, many in that community have told me that deportations have increased and they are afraid to even go out into town because they could be deported at any point.

After they cross the border into Ouanaminthe, clear customs and find transportation to Cap-Haïtien, Mónica, Siriana and their children will be about an hour ride from reaching their new home. Like Mónica did when she was 10 years old, her children, like many

[116] This is the community that I mention in the introduction of this thesis.

others, will have to adjust to living in a country in which they were not born, as young immigrants. Hopefully they will be able to find favorable conditions there that will allow them to remain as long as they desire. However, given the conditions Roland describes in the epigraph that opens this chapter, the challenges ahead will be many.

Roland Laguerre, is 41 years old and now lives in Port-au-Prince. I met him one afternoon while we both sat on the second-floor porch of the hotel where I stayed during my short stay in Ouanaminthe. The hotel was located just a five-minute walk from the gated-bridge built over Massacre River, which demarcates the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.[117]

As Roland and I watched the mass migration unfolding, he she shared with me his own story of migration. Roland lived in the Dominican Republic from 1989 until 2011, where he had worked in agriculture on farmlands located just outside of Santo Domingo. He would cross over into the Dominican Republic and would return to Haiti regularly. He never took his family with him because "*here in Haiti they have security, since they don't have to worry about papers.*" He added: "*en su país, uno vive un poco mal, pero por lo menos vive. - In your country, one lives a little bad, but you at least live*."

Regarding his time in the Dominican Republic he said that "*Dominicans at least help – they provide work, support with hospitals, and there are many Haitian students there. They do what they can, but they can't receive all the load.*" Although he did also

[117] The river is named after a 17th century struggle between the Spanish and French colonizers who would eventually split the island among themselves. However, this river was also the site of the 1937 massacre of over 20,000 Haitian people in 1937.

mention something else that I have heard from several other people I have interviewed, and have also seen on various occasions in the news: "*If Dominicans have a problem with one Haitian, they will take it out on all Haitians.*"

About his own country, he asserted that:

> *In Haiti conditions are not good because there is no sensitivity. Those who are on top do not want to extend their hand so that those who are on the bottom can climb up. The few who have much don't help those who have nothing. That's why the country remains the way it is, always in poverty.*

For impoverished Haitian people, migrating to the Dominican Republic and beyond has represented a way to resist structures of domination which, as Roland suggests,[118] are kept in place by the country's own ruling class. However, for many, this has also meant having to continue to live in a constant state of fugitivity – running away from danger and seeking refuge even if that means having to return into the very place from which they originally fled. Black, and impoverished Haitian people continue to endure abject conditions that their ancestors, formerly enslaved Africans, also had to endure. However, they still continue to find ways to resist, even if that means taking flight.

21ST MARRONAGE: A MODERN AND WESTERN MODE OF RESISTANCE

The history of slavery is usually always told as a story of complete and utter domination of black people. However, often disregarded is the history of resistance to the institution of slavery that was waged by kidnapped and enslaved Africans and their

[118] In chapter one, Pg. 35, Lucia Jules also made a similar point.

descendants. Cimarronaje in Spanish, Marronage in English and Quilombismo in Portuguese are all concepts that, in their respective languages, seek to explain the same historical facts: the various levels of resistance through flight that were carried out by enslaved people in the Americas. This is a tradition that has been widely documented throughout the Western Hemisphere. As such, this phenomenon is as "Western" and as part of western modernity as the very institution of racial chattel slavery against which it resisted.

Black, Brazilian intellectual Abdias do Nascimento in 1980 conceptualized Quilombismo as a political project based on the historical fact of marronage in Brazil.[119] In his recent book, political theorist Neil Roberts (2015) analyzed the experiences of marronage as a way to conceptualize freedom.[120] This chapter draws from various elements of Quilombismo, as theorized by Abdias do Nascimento, from *Freedom as Marronage*, as conceptualized by Neil Roberts, and from the work of migration Historian Aviva Chomsky (2014) to argue that the contemporary undocumented migration of black people from Haiti is a 21st century manifestation of marronage – a form of resistance to oppressive social and economic structures that, like racial slavery in the past, seek to preserve populations of exploitable racialized bodies.

The concept of marronage as contemplated contemporaneously tends to have a racialized connotation. It evokes the experiences of enslaved people of African descent and native Americans as they took flight from the oppression of racial slavery imposed by

[119] Nascimento, Abdias. "Quilombismo: An Afro-Brazilian Political Alternative." *Journal of Black Studies* 11, no. 2 (1980): 141–78.
[120] Roberts, Neil. *Freedom as Marronage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.

European colonizers. Slavery itself as an institution predates the colonization of the Americas. And, thus, it could be possible to explore the ways in which enslaved people on the other side of the Atlantic experienced flight from slavery. But, the current racial understanding of the concept of marronage is useful as a way to contemplate the contemporary experiences of marronage carried out by people whose experiences of oppression are also particularly affected by their race.

Caribbean intellectual Edouard Glissant reminds us that prior to the abolition of slavery, a maroon was perceived by plantation owners as "the personification of the devil."[121] Anthropologist Richard Price also points out that “from a European perspective, marronage appeared to be the “chronic plague” of New World plantation societies.”[122] Today, marronage is a concept that is understood as a form of resistance to the oppressive institution of racial slavery. “Illegal” immigration as a trope is currently often mobilized to vilify people who migrate across national borders without regard for the laws put in place by nation-states that require prior authorization in order to enter and/or remain within the nation's sovereign territory. As discussed in the previous chapter, these legal frameworks are often constituted under what philosopher Charles W. Mills (1999) argues to be a racial contract.[123] In the purview of the sovereign state, and the ruling classes in particular, historical marronage and contemporaneous undocumented migration would both fall under the category of illegal acts, with various possible repercussion, particularly for repeat

[121] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 149
[122] Price, Richard. *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*. 2d ed. Johns Hopkins Paperback. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979. Pg. 2
[123] Mills. *The Racial Contract*. 1st New edition edition. Cornell University Press, 1999.

offenders, as is the case for people who migrate illegally into the U.S. -- if deported and caught entering without prior authorization a second time, they will be considered criminals and will have to face jail time and will be banned from entering the country for 10 years. Yet, both marronage and unauthorized migration were and are carried out by individual agents who, after weighing the possible consequences of their actions, decide to risk danger in order to escape from the socially-constructed and reinforced institutions that oppressed them. As Robert Laguerre suggests in the opening epigraphs in this chapter suggest, crossing a national border, in and of itself, does not constitute a morally wrong act. Furthermore, I suggest that marronage in the 21st century constitutes an act of civil disobedience against arbitrary and discriminatory laws.

FREEDOM AS MARRONAGE

For political theorist Neil Roberts, "marronage is a multidimensional, constant act of flight that involves what I ascertain to be four interrelated pillars: distance, movement, property, and purpose."[124] Distance is either physical or conditional; movement entails control over motion and direction; property means a designation that allows for possession and ownership; Purpose entails individual or collective agency. Roberts explores these four pillars through four levels of degrees of marronage: Petit marronage, grand marronage, sovereign marronage and sociogenic marronage. He explores the ways in which the four pillars play out in the different degrees of marronage. In his text, Roberts explores the thinking of certain prominent black historical figures, such as Frederick Douglass and

[124] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 9

Toussaint L'Ouverture, analyzing the ways in which they conceived freedom and the impact of their visions for freedom. For Roberts "Marronage is a flight from the negative, subhuman realm of necessity, bondage, and unfreedom toward the sphere of positive activity and human freedom. Flight is multidimensional, constant, and never static."[125] As such, many of the features of Freedom as Marronage can help understand undocumented immigration as flight from oppressive structures.

As Neil Roberts also points out: "…cadres of republicans disavow slavery and the actions of the enslaved, obscuring the importance of slave's capacity for revolutionary action."[126] By failing to recognize the degree to which the formerly enslaved could act as agents, their complexity as human beings is also disregarded. Susan Buck-Morss (2009) points out that it is very likely that the highly regarded philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was aware of the Haitian revolution, given the fact that a periodical journal he read provided coverage of this historical event as it occurred.[127] The fact that he crafted the master/slave dialectic while aware of the Haitian revolution would constitute an act of disavowal. According to Roberts "one strategically locates an event and then rejects its relevance, knowing full well that it occurred. The double movement produces negative traumatic effects more damaging than silence."[128] Roberts points out the significance of this particularly given the way in which slaves, perhaps because of the dehumanization they endure, are seen as incapable of, first, imagining their conception of freedom, both

[125] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 15
[126] Ibid. Pg. 28
[127] Buck-Morss, Susan. *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*. 1st edition. Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009.
[128] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 29

individually and collectively and, then, enacting "their imagined ideal of freedom into practice."[129] This is significant not just in the way that history remembers the formerly enslaved, but also in the way in which racialized and oppressed people's agency is contemporaneously undermined.

One of the most powerful parts of Neil Roberts' text is the way in which he outlines the story of Frederick Douglass' confrontation with Edward Covey – the man who was supposed to break Douglass as a slave. Roberts maps the way in which Douglass' struggle with Covey led him to set himself mentally free. Douglass wrote, "This spirit made me a freeman in fact, while I remained a slave in form."[130] Through this chart, Roberts points out that the process of Douglass' flight from slavery began after this moment of struggle. The emphasis on the psychological significance of this moment is highly important as it reveals the way in which people who are oppressed can chose to see themselves. For Douglass, this struggle with Covey was the moment in which he decided to no longer allow himself to be oppressed. He would flee at the first moment he could. But first he had to make that decision for himself. This is also a choice people who migrate despite legal restrictions have to make. People who are labeled as "illegal" will also have to decide how they will let that label affect them. Many will try the best they can to hide their status, given the negative stigma it can carry. However, many others, despite running the risk of being targeted, have decided to not only "come out" as undocumented, but also become activists and engage in the struggle for a change in their status. Juan Telemín, a Dominican

[129] Ibid. 2015. Pg. 42
[130] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 76

activist with Reconoci.do, the organization that was constituted in the Dominican Republic to organize against the state's practice of denying the right to citizenship for people of Haitian descent said:

> *That label of "Dominican of Haitian descent" was not something that just anyone was willing to embrace. Because the moment that you would assume that label and realized that you were alone in this, you would feel uncomfortable. But now that you see organized groups, you feel the liberty and see that you can integrate because you are not alone. That is the way in which the current context gave us an opportunity.*

Dominicans of Haitian descent did not migrate "illegally. Instead, in a moment reminiscent of the United States' Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, changes to the nation's laws made their presence illegal. However, as Juan stated, this moment gave young Dominicans of Haitian descent an opportunity to reach out beyond their own communities and see that they were not alone. Through this moment of uncertainty about their right to exists in the only country they have all called home, Dominicans of Haitian descent managed to organize and begun empowering one another. Young activists in the U.S. who are called DREAMers are also an example of this. Many were brought to the United States before they could make that decision for themselves, but the laws in place still hold them accountable for action they may not even recall. Through their own decision to embrace their status as DREAMers and struggle collectively, they also empower others to come out of the shadows and live their lives as freely as they can, despite the man-made legal boundaries that seek to oppress

them. In the words of Douglass "If there is no struggle, there is no progress…. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will."[131]

COMPARATIVE FREEDOM

Frederick Douglass also contemplated the idea of "comparative freedom".[132] Though people who migrate against the legal norms are often encountered by a different form of restraint, when they are considered undocumented migrants, with all the limitations that entails, they at least have a comparatively greater degree of freedom. For instance, the Haitian immigrant who formerly worked as a construction worker earning cents an hour, finds that, even without the official permission to work, he is now able to earn several dollars per hour for that same amount of work in the United States. The access to better paid wages allows him greater freedom and agency and even permits him to help empower his family members in his native country by sending remittances. However, they also have to contend with criminalization because they are considered "illegal" and because they live in a constant state of fugitivity. This idea of comparative freedom also serves to remind us that migration in and of itself is not emancipatory. A person may leave from one oppressive space to enter into another one that simply provides access to a greater degree of freedom than was previously attainable.

[131] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 74
[132] Ibid. Pg. 71-74

RACIALIZATION AS ILLEGALIZATION

On June 26th, as I made my way back to Santo Domingo from Dajabón, the bus driver's assistant said to a passenger: "*Hey, negra (black), where's your passport?*" The young woman searched through her purse and showed him her passport and visa. After quickly looking over her document, he then said to her "*it's important that you have that on you, just in case. You know, with what's going on with black people right now.*" Approximately twenty minutes after that, the bus slowed to a stop in the middle of the highway. We had reached a check-point. A uniformed man with an armband that read "G2" boarded the bus.[133] He walked down the aisle and asked certain people for their identification. He asked three passengers for their IDs. They were all "Haitian looking". By that point I was beginning to understand that despite my dark-brown skin complexion, in the Dominican Republic I was offered a sort of "light-skin privilege." My skin tone was just light enough to fit into what is imagined as being "Dominican looking." At that particular checkpoint, all the passengers who were asked for papers had their documents in order. I do not know what would have happened had anyone not had their passport. But, given the current situation, I imagine not many people would be willing to travel from the border to the interior of the country without their documents.

Although scientific racism has been widely discredited, beliefs about inferiority based on race still linger. This matters particularly because racialization can produce intersecting sites of oppression. For instance, whereas overt discrimination (statutory racism) against black people and other racialized minorities is no longer legal in the United

[133] G2 – Intelligence Office of the National Military -- Dirección Inteligencia Ejército Nacional

States, as Michelle Alexander (2014) demonstrated, given the disproportionate impact of mass incarceration particularly on black people, a new system has been devised to make it acceptable to discriminate against black people, not based on their race, but on their criminal status.[134] The theory of racial formation in the United States, postulated by sociologists Howard Omi and Michael Winat (2014), would further demonstrate that the disproportionate incarceration of black people as a racial project helps to reinforce the racial formation, or the socially constructed notion, that black people are generally also criminal. According to Omi and Winant, racialization is the process by which particular bodies, because of their race, are assigned certain meaning. Thus, even those who are not directly impacted by mass incarceration, because of ideas formed about what "black bodies" mean, are widely believed to be suspicious and potentially criminal.[135] Indeed, in the age of mass incarceration, race is given new salience. This is important because it demonstrates the way in which the criminalization of black subjects in the U.S., who are citizens by birth, also increases the risk for black undocumented people in in the country who would be at greater risk of being subjected to deportation following a police stop, not because they were seen as "potentially illegal" but, because of their race, were interpellated[136] as "potentially criminal." In other words, a black person in the United States could be racially profiled by the police and end up facing deportation because of

[134] Alexander, Michelle. 2012. The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness. New York: The New Press. Pg. 2

[135] Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 2014. Racial Formation in the United States. 3 edition. New York: Routledge.

[136] Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)." In *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, edited by Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, 86–110. John Wiley & Sons, 2006.

their legal immigration status. The fact that undocumented migration is deemed "illegal" further reinforces the racial formation that black people and other minorities are "potentially criminal." As black American activist Opal Tometi recently wrote: "Even though black immigrants [in the U.S.] make up only 7% of the total immigrant population, 20% of all immigrants in deportation proceedings due to criminal convictions are black."[137] In the 1980s, black, Haitian people in the United States were said to be carriers of the HIV virus. Thus, Haitian people in the United States and abroad were also subjected to discrimination based on these erroneous ideas. Possibly because of they are race, Haitian people who have fled to the United States seeking refuge from political persecution have often been criminalized instead of being provided the asylum they needed.[138][139] In the context of the Dominican Republic, people of darker skin-tone are also racially profiled as "potentially illegal" and, even if they are born and raised citizens, they have to make sure that they carry proof of their legal status within the nation.[140]

THE DIALECTIC OF CITIZEN VS. "ILLEGAL" IMMIGRANT

As with the earlier distinctions of barbarian vs. civilized, heathen vs. pious and non-white vs. white, the distinction between citizen and "illegal" immigrant also serve to justify a particular system of exploitation and marginalization. The distinctions are created by those in power and extend a sense of belonging to a select section of the population who

[137] Tometi, Opal. "The Immigration Challenge No One Is Talking About." Time, April 29, 2016. http://time.com/4312628/immigration-1996-laws/
[138] Farmer, Paul. 2006. Pgs. 101
[139] Danticat, Edwidge. 2007. Pg. 213
[140] This point is also addressed in the previous chapter.

benefit from the exclusion of the people who are placed at the negative side of the dialectic. Theorist Anibal Quijano observes that "... it is very clear that the large majority of the exploited, the dominated, the discriminated against, are precisely the members of the 'races', 'ethnies', or 'nations' into which the colonized populations, were categorized in the formative process of that world power, from the conquest of America and onward."[141] Xenophobic discourses have historically been mobilized against these populations, holding them as scapegoats for socioeconomic problems of inequality, while masking the fact that those in power have amassed a disproportionate amount of wealth, leaving others to fight for what is leftover. As Mills underscores: "if a transnational racial disaggregation were to be done, it would reveal that whites control a percentage of the world's wealth grossly disproportionate to their numbers."[142]

UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION AS PETIT MARRONAGE

As I walked away from the bus stop in Santo Domingo, with my bags in tow, I was pleasantly surprised to see a young Haitian man selling what, after a couple months in the Dominican Republic, would become my favorite drink: coconut water. Lemund, 24, is a young entrepreneur. Since he arrived in the Dominican Republic 7 years ago he has been working in the streets, providing the perfect elixir with which to quench your thirst on a hot day in Santo Domingo. His work routine consists of a constant haul along a 3-mile route between the Ministry of Interior and Police and Mercado Nuevo, the market where

[141] Quijano, Aníbal. 2007. "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality." Cultural Studies 21 (2-3): 168–78. doi:10.1080/09502380601164353. Pg. 168-169

[142] Mills, Charles. 1999. The Racial Contract. 1st New edition edition. Cornell University Press. Pg. 36

he re-stocks his supply of coconuts. He confessed that on average he makes anywhere between 400 and 500 Dominican pesos a day ($8.75 - $11 USD), which is two to three times the 3.81 dollars a day he would be making working one of the rare minimum wage jobs available in Haiti – rare given the fact that the informal sector represents 80% of Haiti's economy. In the Dominican Republic this same figure hovers around 50%.

Surprised that he was the only coconut-water vendor in sight that day, I asked Lemund whether he had been able to register under the government's plan. Fortunately for him, since his work route brought him to the Ministry of Interior and Police on a daily basis, he was able to leverage the relationships he had established with people who work there in order to obtain the papers he needed. Unlike thousands of people who had to wait outside, day after day, in order to register, his daily customers at the Ministry helped expedite the process for him. Lemund was not the only one who was able to leverage capital to get ahead. In his case, it was his social capital that allowed him to obtain his papers; others who had the means were able to get their registration going once they paid a small bribe to the officials organizing the process – an obvious flaw in the system. However, a large number of people who wanted to participate in this process did not have the means even to complete the paperwork the government required of them.

Lemund does not have children to support. So, with his money, he helps his family members in Haiti and saves. For now, he toils under the hot sun in order to continue on his journey to find a place where he is welcome and in which he can earn a better living. Despite having been in the Dominican Republic for the past 7 years, and having been able to obtain the papers he needed to officially stay in the country, he is already contemplating

his next move. He is thinking about moving either to the island nation of Dominica or the South American nation of Chile. He is in touch with Haitian friends who migrated to both of these places and update him on how favorable or not conditions are in their new homes. "*Here people mistreat Haitians too much*," he lamented. Like Lemund, thousands of black people from Haiti have migrated to the Dominican Republic out of necessity, often having to endure mistreatment and abuses made possible by the way they are racialized and by their condition as undocumented migrants.

Modern undocumented migration can, most often, be understood as petit marronage, the first degree of marronage Roberts explores. It is a small, yet revolutionary form of resistance in that, through it, the agent seeks to unbind himself/herself from the shackles of poverty and over-exploitation imposed on them geographically. The illegality of immigration is the way the racial contract ensures that this small act of resistance is quelled, ensuring that wealth distribution remains largely intact. As “illegally” present people, most will be granted access to the menial jobs few locals want to do. But the high-paying jobs will be policed to a greater extent, being safeguarded for those who hold official "membership" within the nation-state. Those whose "illegal" presence is detected, despite causing no harm to the local community, and, arguably, making important contributions to society through their often thankless and overlooked labor, and contributing to taxes that are not return to them, are subject to detention, incarceration and deportation.

There are those who argue that the problem with undocumented immigrants is that they bring down the wages associated with certain labor, since, due to their legal status,

they will accept a lower payment than a local citizen whom, according to the law, would also have to be paid additional benefits along with their daily wages. However, I argue that the problem is not with the migrant worker but with the "illegality" itself that provides the conditions for this to be possible. If any and all jobs would be available to anyone, regardless of their "citizenship" status, the "free market" would potentially determine the real value of their work. Proponents of the doctrine of neoliberalism argue for the elimination of protectionist policies such as import tariffs. Yet, fail to consider the enormous impact protectionist migration restrictions have on the global economy. Or rather, proponents of neoliberalism disavow the economic implications of migration restrictions when juxtaposed with the free and open flow of capital. As Haitian author Edwidge Danticat recently wrote, "we live in a world where, as the late Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano said, money can move freely, but people cannot."[143]

Illegality undermines the "free market" and makes it possible for certain over-exploited people to carry out underpaid work whose real value is much greater as a contribution to society – as long as they remain "illegal" abroad; legal in their impoverished nation; or in legal but marginalized class or caste (as Nascimento points out regarding Afro-Brazilians favelados.)[144] For instance, the price of the food that needs to be handpicked remains lower because of the underpaid labor that factors into this process. In addition to other factors – such as subsidies, access to greater technology, and large-scale agriculture – illegality makes it possible for food produced in what Paul Gilroy calls "overdeveloped"

[143] Danticat, Edwidge. 2015. "Black Bodies in Motion and In Pain." The New Yorker, June 22, 2015. http://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/black-bodies-in-motion-and-in-pain
[144] Nascimento, Abdias Do. (1980). Pg. 150

nations[145] to be cheaper than food grown locally, in the global south. Thus, the continued existence of "illegal" migration as a category within a given nation-state, allows for the exploitation of people.

It has been well documented that, the Clinton administration, with the express intent of helping to feed Haitian people, pushed the Haitian government to lower import tariffs, allowing the U.S. to sell produce to Haitians at a very low price. Haitian peasants were unable to compete with the price of food items such as rice, which are cultivated in the U.S. with the aid of government subsidies. In effect, the U.S. established a market to which it could dump its excess food. This contributed to the destruction of small-scale Haitian agriculture and consolidated favorable conditions for capitalist exploitation. In 2010, former U.S. president Bill Clinton before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee "apologized" for the negative impact these policies had for Haitian peasants. "It may have been good for some of my farmers in Arkansas, but it has not worked. It was a mistake, I had to live everyday with the consequences of the loss of capacity to produce a rice crop in Haiti to feed those people because of what I did; nobody else."[146] The ubiquity throughout Haiti of the white sacks of rice with U.S. flags are a constant reminder of this policy, and a sign that these measures have certainly yielded a positive outcome for the Arkansas rice farmers who were Clinton's own constituents when he was governor of that state. But, as with a myriad other policies that have been implemented for the benefit of those in power, at the detriment of people of color, empty apologies are meaningless.

[145] Gilroy, Paul. Against Race: Imagining Political Culture beyond the Color Line. Belknap Press, 2002.
[146] Associated Press (AP). 2010. With cheap food imports, Haiti can't feed itself. http://www.nbcnews.com/id/35967561/ns/world_news-americas/#.VnBuzkpfzIU

Recent events such as this one, in which the harms are identified and acknowledge, yet nothing is done to correct them are part of what Saidiya Hartman and Stephen Best call fugitive justice.[147]

With a growing number of peasants unable to sell their produce at a price that yielded income, they were forced into idleness and unemployment, leading many Haitian peasants to sell the bit of land they had and move to the city. This also led to a surplus in the number of available bodies to be fed into the capitalist system of exploitative, low-paid labor.[148] As has been documented through U.S. Embassy cable leaks published by WikiLeaks, subsequent U.S. administrations have actively participated in debates regarding the increase of minimum wages for Haitian workers. Standing with U.S. manufacturers (U.S. interests), the U.S. government pressured the Haitian government to abstain from raising the meager salaries workers were receiving. It was argued that an increase from $3 to $5 dollars a day would be detrimental to the garment manufacturing industry in Haiti; this despite the fact that "According to a 2008 Worker Rights Consortium study, a family of one working member and two dependents needed at least 550 Haitian gourdes, or $12.50, per day to meet normal living expenses."[149] Historian Aviva Chomsky documents that:

> In the nineteenth century, industrialization and colonialism separated more and more people worldwide from their lands and left them no option except wage labor.

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[147] Best, Stephen, and Hartman Saidiya. 2005. "Fugitive Justice." Representations 92 (1): 1–15. doi:10.1525/rep.2005.92.1.1.

[148] Schuller, Mark, and Pablo Morales, eds. *Tectonic Shifts: Haiti since the Earthquake*. 1st ed. Sterling, Va: Kumarian Press, 2012.

[149] Coughlin, Dan, and Kim Ives. "WikiLeaks Haiti: Let Them Live on $3 a Day." The Nation, June 1, 2011. https://www.yahoo.com/news/wikileaks-haiti-let-them-live-3-day-153403320.html.

> As access to land diminished, people started voluntarily moving to cities and seeking to work for others.[150]

Small-scale Haitian farmers produced their own food and held out from this process for as long as they could. But ill-conceived policies eventually took their toll. Formerly able to work for their own subsistence, on their own land, many Haitian peasants were forced to venture across the border to work the fields in the Dominican Republic as "illegal" laborers. On March 31, 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it would ship "500 metric tons of packaged, dry-roasted peanuts grown in the United States" to Haiti, as a "humanitarian effort," despite the fact that peanuts are one of the crops still successfully cultivated in Haiti.[151] Thus, "humanitarian" efforts that undermine the autonomy of Haitian people continue to be carried out, despite the detrimental impact they have on the local economy.

Chomsky reminds us that: "In the twenty-first century, laws are still used to [sic] keep certain people working in low-wage, undesirable jobs. ... overt force became less and less necessary as a way of making people work. Now, people work out of need."[152] In few places is this transition from forced labor to labor of necessity clearer than in Haiti. Despite the history of the Haitian revolution, as Neil Roberts points out, even L'Ouverture 's vision for a post-revolutionary Haiti entailed the forced labor of the emancipated slaves.[153] Today, the UN's peacekeeping mission in Haiti helps to ensure that any form of mass resistance

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[150] Chomsky, Aviva. 2014. Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal. Boston: Beacon Press. Pg. 38
[151] Wood, Sandra. "USDA Blog » USDA Provides Nutritious U.S. Peanuts in Humanitarian Effort for Haiti," March 31, 2016. http://blogs.usda.gov/2016/03/31/usda-provides-nutritious-u-s-peanuts-in-humanitarian-effort-for-haiti/
[152] Chomsky, Aviva. 2014. Pg. 25
[153] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 108

against the status quo is contained. In the case of Brazil, the nation in the Americas with the largest black population, Abdias do Nascimento pointed out in 1980 that nearly 4.5 million black Brazilians shared a similar reality as black Haitians, having to live a “small daily adventure of trying to shine shoes, wash cars, deliver packages or messages, sell fruit or candy on the street, and so on, all at the miserable and unreliable salary of pennies.”[154] Recognizing this dire situation, he invokes the significance of Quilombos, which “were the result of this vital exigency for enslaved Africans, to recover their liberty and human dignity through escape from captivity, organizing viable free societies in Brazilian territory.”[155] The establishment of Quilombo communities marks the transition from what Roberts understands as petit marronage and grand marronage to sovereign and sociogenic marronage. In Abdias' own words “Apparently a sporadic phenomenon in the beginning, Quilombos were rapidly transformed from the improvisation of emergency into the methodical and constant life form of the African masses who refused to submit to the exploitation and violence of the slave system.”[156]

Nascimento's Quilombismo manifesto begins by unsettling ideas that seek to limit the past of Afro-Brazilians as beginning in slavery. He shines a light on this as selective remembrance that, in his view, is mobilized by Brazilian elites in order to prevent "black Brazilians from being able to identify and actively assume their ethnic, historical and cultural roots..." [157] He criticizes Brazilian society for refusing to acknowledge that

[154] Nascimento, Abdias Do. (1980). Pg. 151
[155] Ibid. Pg. 151
[156] Ibid. Pg. 151
[157] Ibid. Pg. 142

enslaved Africans had a glorious past that even predated European colonization of the Americas and, thus, the institution of racial chattel slavery. Nascimento goes on to outline possible historical linkages between African civilizations and Native American civilizations. In his own words "my objective here is simply to call attention to this significant dimension of the antiquity of Afro-Brazilian memory."[158] Nascimento believes that reclaiming this past is important because it would help to foster greater consciousness among black Brazilians, and also greater solidarity with the "black African nation worldwide."[159] He also asserts that the Quilombismo project he proposes for liberation against the negative impacts of European colonialism entails a struggle that "cannot be separated from the mutual liberation of the indigenous peoples of these lands."[160] The erasure of Afro-descendants from historical relevance serves to downplay the degree to which the formerly enslaved, and thus their descendants, could potentially be considered fully human. Recalling here Wynter's work,[161] this becomes particularly problematic when white, European culture and values are made the hegemonic and "default" ones for all other people throughout the world to follow. This leads also to the continued promotion of Western supremacy, based on the invalidation or disavowal of people who have been colonized, subjugated and oppressed.

Recovering and building upon their history, as well as "their cultural, economic, political, and social bases," Nascimento suggests that, through Quilombismo, "Afro-

[158] Nascimento, Abdias Do. (1980). Pg. 146
[159] Ibid. Pg. 143
[160] Ibid. Pg. 148
[161] Her argument on the coloniality of being human is addressed in the previous chapter of this thesis.

Americans throughout the entire hemisphere can consolidate their true heritage of solidarity and struggle" as an "international alternative for popular black political organization."[162] As Nascimento conceptualizes it, Quilombismo would be a Pan-African anti-imperial, black nationalist project that would transcend "inequalities motivated by race, color, religion or ideology."[163]

In many ways, Nascimento conceives of a safe haven in which those who have been oppressed for hundreds of years can finally live and thrive in solidarity. For once, their interests would be placed above those of "the nation," which usually means the ruling class. It is unclear how this separatist state could be established. But it certainly calls for some of the same elements that Neil Roberts points out as inherent to marronage; In particular movement, to the new designated state, and natality, given the call for a new political order that would also likely be based upon constitutionalism.[164] Given its scope, Nascimento's project entails elements of what Roberts calls sovereign marronage and sociogenic marronage.

Sovereign marronage, as exemplified by the Haitian revolution, can lead to the establishment of a new state that can address some of the "normative structures of unfreedom," but it can also lead to new forms of domination, in the form of dictatorial governments.[165] Nascimento's project, if instituted as a non-sovereign project, would fall under the realm of sociogenic marronage, for which the "conception of freedom is shaped

[162] Nascimento, Abdias Do. (1980). Pg. 152
[163] Ibid. Pg. 155
[164] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 23-24
[165] Ibid. Pg. 111

by cognition, metaphysics, egalitarianism, hope for refuge, and the experiences of masses in a social and political order."[166] Both sovereign and sociogenic marronage are large-scale projects that would entail a great deal of organizing and resources for mobilization. And although it is possible for marginalized people to organize their resistance beyond the realm of oppressive structures, while a project such as this one can take shape, faced with dire conditions, thousands are opting to escape the confines of capitalistic exploitation at home only to find themselves facing other man-made barriers abroad that seek to make their presence "illegal", marginal, and thus, also exploitable.

CONCLUSION

The ideas about Quilombismo and Freedom as Marronage advanced by Abdias do Nascimento and Neil Roberts, respectively, provide important tools through which the man-made status of illegality can be understood. They provide ways to think about how struggles for liberation can be waged. Immigration, even if "illegal" can help establish a more solid path toward freedom. The racialized restrictions on migration must be acknowledged and challenged, especially given the history of exploitation certain groups of people have been forced to endure given the current dominant structures of governance.

[166] Roberts, Neil. 2015. Pg. 117

Conclusion

As I neared the end of my research in the Dominican Republic, while in a batey in the north of the country, I had a conversation with a 28-year-old black man who was born and raised in the Dominican Republic by Haitian parents. He and his two sisters are very resourceful entrepreneurs who has managed to pool limited resources to start a small business. Together, they sell delicious, freshly-made passion fruit juice and grilled ham-and-cheese sandwiches, out of their small house.

I shared with him that I was born in Colombia and he responded with delight that Colombia was one of three countries he has always wanted to visit. The other two, he said, were France and Africa. I corrected him and told him that Africa is not a country. He did not understand what I meant. I proceeded to explain to him that African is a large continent with 54 different countries with a vast diversity of cultures and languages. In his mind, he confessed, Africa had always existed as a single country. I could not fault him for having this misconception. Despite having been born in the Dominican Republic, during a time when the constitution stated that anyone born in the country would have the right to citizenship, he was not considered a citizen, and, as such, he was not allowed to pursue much education.

After this exchange, I wondered about how he received this faulty information. How is it that he knew about Colombia and France as countries, but was not aware that, in his mind, Africa, the second largest continent in the world, had been diminished to a single nation? How is it that a black man, who is proud to be Haitian and proud to be black, can have such a limited perspective of the continent from which his ancestors arrived? While

thinking about this I recalled the first reference to Africa that I heard upon my arrival in the Dominican Republic. When I presented my passport to the immigration officer, after asking me about the purpose for my trip, he proceeded to ask me if I had traveled to Africa within the past month. Puzzled by the question, I asked him why that question was asked. He said it was because of the Ebola outbreak in Africa. I wondered if he, too, imagined Africa as a single country. I imagine that this question was not conceived by him. It was most likely formulated by government officials who are in charge of policies regarding travel and migration. I wondered if this institutionalized question also contributes to the minimization of Africa in the collective imaginary. The way that Africa as a continent is diminished is also emblematic of the systemic disavowal of marronage as a form of resistance waged by black people of African descent. This is also why the struggles that Mónica, Billie, and Lucia continue to face are ignored, or are only addressed when their concerns become problematic for the people whose lives are seen as valuable.

No other country in the Americas is considered to be as African and as black as Haiti. The history of oppression and marginalization that people of African descent in the Americas suffered continues to be tied to hegemonic ideas about Africa and blackness. Given the long history of exploitation and marginalization of black people, of African descent, by failing to acknowledge that an anti-black racial hierarchy still exists, we continue to tacitly accept the normalization of ideas and policies that, even if color-blind on the surface, serve to perpetually maintain blackness at the negative end of a dialectic between blackness and full citizenship. The citizenship and migration crisis on the island of Hispaniola is a transnational issue, caused by a long history of racialized and gendered

exploitation and marginalization. Marronage continues to exist in the 21st century because racialized oppressive structures are still deeply embedded into the governing structures of modern nation-states. Thus, civil disobedience to these unjust social-constructed and reinforced barriers is a valid form of resistance that is often disavowed.

A change in course is long overdue, and given the growth of global inequality and the worldwide migration crisis to which it has led, it is critical that we question and decolonize the ideas that continue to promote the devaluation of black lives, as well as those of other people who are racialized and deemed as less valuable. And it is also crucial that migration policies – and other structures that benefit the wealthier few at the expense of the impoverished, often racialized masses – are reconfigured so that, past racial and gendered injustices are not normalized and perpetuated in our contemporary society. In the particular case of Haiti, it is crucial that the nation itself and all who hold power and influence over the Haitian state, deal with their own colonial baggage. This is an inheritance that has led to the normalization of the exploitation of the darker, poorer population. Marronage is a struggle to reassert one's humanity. Undocumented migration in the 21st century by racialized, impoverished people is also a valid way to resist against enforced systems of social and economic oppression and dehumanization.

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